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**LECTURES**  
**ON THE**  
**BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.**



LECTURES  
ON THE  
BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER,

BEING  
THE SUBSTANCE OF LENTEN DISCOURSES

DELIVERED IN THE  
PARISH CHURCH OF ST. ANN, DUBLIN.

BY  
HERCULES H. DICKINSON, A. M., VICAR,  
EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

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## DEDICATION.

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TO THE MOST REV. RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.,

*Lord Archbishop of Dublin.*

---

MY LORD,

THE greater number of these Lectures were delivered in your Grace's hearing; and it is in obedience to your desire that I now publish them.

I should not, but for this, have thought of doing so; nor could I, without such sanction, anticipate anything but disappointment from the venture. But your Grace's approval is to me a sufficient encouragement.

I thank you for allowing me to inscribe the Volume with your name, not merely because that will be likely to gain readers whom it would not otherwise obtain, but because you have thus given me an opportunity of testifying my grateful sense of many obligations to your Grace.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Grace's faithful, attached servant,

HERCULES H. DICKINSON.



## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

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IN the present Edition I have re-written the Lectures in several places, and have inserted in them some additional matter, which, though incongruous perhaps with their original design as pulpit-discourses, may make them more useful to the reader, or in the way of reference. I have also added some further notes ; and an Appendix on the Ordinal and other Occasional Offices. But, in great part, the volume consists of Lectures as originally given to an ordinary mixed congregation. It therefore neither pretends to be classed with works of greater learning, and fuller information, on the Prayer-Book ; nor does it challenge such criticism, as a more formal treatise would have no right to deprecate. It is, what it professes to be, an attempt to make the Prayers and Services of our Church better understood by her lay members ; and some of these may

read a Lecture, who have not access to commentaries used by theological students, nor time to study them.

As for the substance of the volume, it is composed, for the most part, of what may, with some simplification, be made intelligible even to younger members of our Church ; for, I can answer for it, from experience, that classes of children, even below the usual age for Confirmation, can be made not only to feel interested in, but to understand and to remember, the greater and more important portion of such explanations of our Services as these Lectures contain.

I have tested this frequently, by careful examinations, held at the conclusion of courses of catechetical instruction on the Prayer-Book, given to school classes. And it will surely be admitted, that in the case of all children, considered old enough to be present at the Public Services of our Church, it is important—without unwisely dwelling upon controverted points—to make them intelligently acquainted with the meaning of the prayers in which they are invited to take part. It is, indeed, the duty of all members of our Church to know and study those forms which they so solemnly use in supplication and thanksgiving to God. And it must, therefore, be the correlative duty of all ministers



of our Church to do their utmost in instructing their people to "pray with the understanding," as well as with the spirit.

The objections brought forward by those who would discard the Book of Common Prayer ; the misapprehensions too common with those who use it ; the want of interest, and listlessness, which mar the effect of our Church Service in so many congregations, are traceable, I fear, to this cause more than any other—the want of systematic instruction from our pulpits—as well as in our Schools—in the distinctive doctrines and formularies of our Church. The people easily and naturally come to the conclusion, that a subject which is uniformly excluded from the pulpit is of little practical importance ; while, on the other hand, it will invariably be found that explanation of the Services tends more effectually than anything else to an improved performance of them. Of one thing I am persuaded, that those who love the Prayer-Book most are they who know it best ; and that those who object to it most loudly are the same also who really know it least.

A revision of ourselves, in our use of the devotional forms which our forefathers have bequeathed to us, is what we need far more than any revision of the forms themselves ; a reformation in short,

not of the Liturgy, but of the worshippers. As the Rev. Philip Freeman says truly :—" What is really wanted is a better understanding and appreciation of what was done then [at the English Reformation], together with faith and love to give—what has never yet been given—full effect to it. Our need, in a word, is not of new Services, but of a new mind and heart, in clergy and people alike, towards those which we have."\*

One fundamental error the same writer notices,† which has pervaded most of the commentaries on our Prayer-Book ; the assumption, namely, that the changes made at the Reformation " amounted to nothing less than the composition of an entirely new set of Services out of the materials of the old, selected and recombined at pleasure, on altogether a different plan and principle. The former structure was deemed by them to have been absolutely pulled down before the new one was erected. Whereas nothing is more remarkable in the original Preface to the revised Services, already referred to, than the utter unconsciousness which it manifests on the part of the Revisers of *having done anything more than revise*. Certain things taken away—a certain fusing and consolidation of parts or elements

\* Principles of Divine Service, vol. i. p. 296.

† Ib. p. 9.

heretofore disjointed and broken up,—certain provisions for securing that the Psalms and Lessons should be really and thoroughly *used*, and not *skipped* for the most part as in time past,—and the turning of the whole into English;—this was their entire idea of what they had done. They expected the people and Church of the day to accept the Services as essentially, and for all practical purposes the same Services, revised;—and, what is more, as such the Church and people manifestly did accept them. So clear were the Revisers on this point, that Cranmer (as Jeremy Taylor has recorded) offered to prove that “the order of the Church of England, set out by authority by Edward VI., was *the same that had been used in the Church for fifteen hundred years past.*” Jeremy Taylor’s Works, vol. vii. p. 292.

In the event of any further revision of our Prayer-Book, these facts ought to be fully borne in mind. “There is but one way (the writer above quoted continues) of being true to our Service-Book; and that is, to take it for what it is, and for what they who first-handed it over to us in its revised form believed it, with all their hearts, to be.

“It is an old book. Its elements, its method of service, its conception, and its order are all old—older than any other institution in this country;—

some of them as old as the days of the Apostles themselves."\*

If a Church convocation is to be held,—whatever be its constitution, and whether laymen take part in it or not,—it is of the utmost importance that all the members of the Church—both lay and clerical—should be prepared for it beforehand by some knowledge of the history, structure, and meaning, of the Book of Common Prayer. For it were pity indeed that the wise, temperate, and Christian work of our Reformers should be marred now either by any retrogression on the one side, towards the principles and practices of which they disapproved, or any ill-considered rush, upon the other, to the revolutionary extremes which they judiciously avoided. The difficulties of the Church between these two opposite tendencies would be probably complicated now by the existence of a third difficulty, from which our Reformers were free, the rationalizing and latitudinarian spirit of the present day. And yet above the storms that rise around us, and in the darkness that overhangs the present issue to the United Church of the controversies which alarm and disturb some of its members, there are abundant signs that the good ship is not forsaken by that living Presence which bore her safely

\* Principles of Divine Service, vol. i. p. 28.

through past dangers ; and our fears as to the future may well be silenced by the voice of Him who says to our faithless hearts—"Be of good cheer : it is I ; be not afraid."

The Church of England sees now arising within her a third party, successor to the two which have stood forward prominently to represent her since the beginning of this century.

Each of these three schools of thought originated, no doubt, in the desire to awaken attention to some obscured or half-forgotten truth, though in its fuller development it may have even raised new prejudices against that truth by presenting it in a one-sided form, or with such exaggerations and extraneous additions as nullified the good which was at first proposed.

Meantime the Church herself—restrained (shall I not say, under God's Providence ?) from committing herself, amidst these passing agitations, to any partial influences, or any change—has continued, in her unaltered Offices, Articles, and Constitution, to bear the same steady witness to all those truths which she had "heard from the beginning ;" prophesying ever according to the proportion of the faith ; presenting and maintaining still that ancient system of doctrine and discipline which is not

“High,” nor “Broad,” nor “Low,” but Scriptural, Catholic, and Apostolic.

If changes are to be made, let us hope they may be of such a nature, and within such limits, as shall leave the purity, impartiality, and catholicity of our Church, untouched. We cannot ask anything better than that they may be proposed, debated, and carried out, with the same calm, moderate, and Christian wisdom, that guided our own early English Reformers.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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MUCH of our Prayer Book is derived from very ancient sources and forms used in the Christian Church from time immemorial. But in the middle ages these had become corrupted by the intermixture of many superstitions; so much so, that the churches seemed to have forgotten that they who worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

When Augustine, the missionary, was sent to Britain in the year 597, by Gregory the Great, he found some remnant of the ancient British Church existing still, amidst the oppression of surrounding heathenism. And when he founded a church in Kent, he introduced a ritual derived for the most part from the forms of the Gallican Church, from which also the older British services had been principally taken. With this some peculiar Romish forms were blended, but the entire Roman ritual was never introduced into the Anglo-Saxon Church.\*

Augustine, however, and the succeeding bishops of that Church, were allowed to make alterations at their

\* See Procter's History of the Book of Common Prayer, and Palmer's Orig. Lit.

own discretion in the prayers, chants, rites, and ceremonies used in their several dioceses; hence arose that variety of rituals, or *uses*, as they are called, which are referred to in the preface of our Prayer Book CONCERNING THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH.

These were known by the names of the different dioceses where they were employed; as, for example, the *Salisbury use*, the *Hereford use*, and those of *Bangor*, *York*, and *Lincoln*. Of these the most remarkable and the most generally adopted was that drawn up about A. D. 1085 by Osmund, Bishop of Salisbury. This service-book was called the *Use of Sarum*.

Among the devotional books of the Anglo-Saxon period were several short manuals, containing the first lessons of religious faith and practice. From these sources chiefly was derived the "*Prymer*," which we find spoken of under that name in the 14th century. This, with some superstitious forms, contained the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Litany, and a selection from the Psalms. These were partly in English, partly in Latin, but all the public services were in Latin. In 1534, the first reformed Primer was published. And in 1537, a book derived to a great extent from this was sanctioned by the bishops, and put forth by royal authority, entitled, "*The Institution of a Christen Man*." Six years later this was republished, with corrections, under the title of "*A necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christen Man*." This is sometimes called the "*King's Book*," though really compiled by Cranmer and his brother bishops.

In 1540, an order was given by Henry VIII., to set up the English Bible in the churches. But as it was not yet read in the public service, it was chiefly through the extracts given in the small Primers that the people became acquainted with the Word of God, and that the Reformation made its early way.\*

In the year 1542, a very important advance was made towards liturgical reformation by a decision of the House of Bishops, that "on every Sunday and holyday throughout the year the curate of every parish church, after the Te Deum and Magnificat, should openly read to the people one chapter of the New Testament in English without exposition; and, when the New Testament was read over, then to begin the Old."

This was the first step towards the adoption of the English instead of the Latin tongue in the Church service. This substitution was first made, as to the public prayers, in the year 1545, when all preceding Primers were superseded by that revised by Cranmer, "the Primer set forth by the King's Majesty and his clergy to be taught, learned, and read; and none other to be used throughout all his dominions." From the accession of Edward VI. in 1547, the work of reformation made rapid progress. Scriptural instruction was secured to the people by the publication of the First Book of Homilies; and it was ordered that, besides the chapters from the Old and New Testament, the Epistle and Gospel should be also read in English. A committee of bishops and divines, with

\* "I am confident that these small books have not been fully appreciated by our historians."—Lathbury's Hist., p. 7.

Cranmer and Ridley amongst them, was appointed to arrange an "uniform order of Communion according to the rules of Scripture and the use of the Primitive Church." This order of Communion was not a full or complete Communion office, but an English form, added, for the sake of the people, to the Latin mass. It was, however, an important step towards the adoption of a tongue "understanded of the people" in the most solemn office of the Church. This order also first restored the cup to the laity, directing "Communion in both kinds."

In the course of a year the first complete English Service-book was published, entitled, "the Book of Common-Prayer and Administration of the rites and sacraments of the Church, after the use of the Church of England."

This book, having been first sanctioned by Convocation, was accepted by both Houses of Parliament in 1548, and is now usually known by the name of "The First Book of Edward the Sixth." The chapter prefixed to our Book of Common Prayer "concerning the service of the Church," constituted the preface to this First Book; and the reforms introduced, as well as the spirit by which they were directed, are there set forth.

The new Prayer-Book was received with very general readiness; but in order still further to recommend the adoption of it, a royal visitation was appointed. It is worth while, as showing the mind of the compilers with regard to certain ceremonies, to quote from the instructions given to the visitors by them; they enjoin "*that*

*no minister do counterfeit the Popish Mass, as to kiss the Lord's table; crossing his head with the palm; holding up his finger, hand, or thumb joined towards his temple; breathing upon the bread or chalice; showing the sacrament openly before the distribution of the Communion . . . setting any light upon the Lord's board at any time; and finally to use no other ceremonies than are appointed in the King's Book of Common Prayers."*\*

In February, 1550, an ordinal was set forth under the great seal of England. It was called "The Form and Manner of making and consecrating of Archbishops, Priests, and Deacons," and was drawn up by "six prelates and six other men of this realm learned in God's law." In the year after, a committee of divines was appointed to revise the Prayer-Book, and to prepare such further alterations as would render it "more fit for the stirring up of all Christian people to the true honouring of Almighty God." Of these commissioners, the principal was Archbishop Cranmer. He was assisted by the two foreign refugees, Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr, who were at the time Regius Professors of Divinity at Cambridge and Oxford. This committee made several alterations, by adding and omitting, and introduced some improvements; in the Daily Prayer, the Introductory sentences, the Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution, were placed at the beginning of the service, which had before, somewhat abruptly, opened with the Lord's Prayer. In other parts of the book the most important changes were the insertion of the Decalogue, and the omission of the follow-

\* Cardwell, Doc. Ann. XV. 2.

ing:—the mixture of water with the wine at the Holy Communion—the ancient Romish usages of exorcism, anointing and putting on the chrisom at baptism—and the custom of trine immersion, as a symbol of belief in the Holy Trinity. The anointing in the Visitation of the Sick, and prayers for the dead in the Burial Office, were also omitted. It is certain that both Luther and Melancthon exercised considerable influence on those who compiled this English Prayer-Book.\* Parts of the Litany, the Exhortations in the Communion Service, and portions of the Baptismal Office, are in fact derived from a book called Hermann's Consultation, which was composed at the desire of Hermann, Prince Archbishop of Cologne by Melancthon and Bucer, and taken by them chiefly from the Nuremberg ritual of Martin Luther. The publication of this revised Prayer-Book was delayed for some time by differences of opinion with respect to it, and it did not come into use till the close of 1552.

It was not until February, 1551, that an injunction was sent to the Lord-Deputy (Sir Anthony St. Leger), to have the English Book of Common Prayer read in the Irish churches. And accordingly, Edward's First Book was for the first time publicly used on Easter Sunday, 1551, in the Cathedral of Christ Church, Dublin. In the course of a few months after, a new Lord-Deputy came over (Sir James Crofts), bearing instructions "to propagate the worship of God in the *English* tongue; and the service to be translated into *Irish* in those places which

\* See Archbishop Laurence's Bampton Lectures, in evidence of this. See also Note A, at end of Introduction.

need it." It would have been well if this could have been thoroughly carried out. But there were difficulties. Few of the Irish clergy understood English, and of the people fewer still. And though the priests knew how to speak Irish, they could not *read* it, for there were no books printed in that language. It became necessary, therefore, to authorize a Latin service for use in these cases. And this the Irish Act of Uniformity did (2 Eliz. c. 2). But though this has been often censured, it should be recollected that it was *intended* only as a temporary measure. The Act expressly states the difficulty of having the Prayer-Book printed in Irish, and limits the use of Latin to cases "where the common minister or priest hath not the use of the English tongue." And Queen Elizabeth sent, in 1571, a font of Irish types to Dublin, "in hope that God in his mercy would raise up some to translate the New Testament into their mother tongue." Also, says Ware, "it was ordered that the prayers of the Church should be printed in that character and language."\*

On the accession of Queen Elizabeth, in 1558, a committee of divines was appointed to compare and revise the former Prayer-Books, with a view to restore the reformed service, which had been prohibited in the reign of Mary; and the New Book, which in the main agreed with the Second Book of Edward VI.† was first used in

\* In 1603, the Prayer-Book was printed in Irish, by William Daniel, or O'Donnell, Archbishop of Tuam, who had published the first Irish version of the New Testament in A. D. 1602.

† For an account of the differences, see Wheatly.

the Queen's Chapel on May 12th, 1559, and in St. Paul's Cathedral a few days after.

The Prayer-Book continued without any further change than a revision of the Calendar till the accession of James the First, when the Puritans presented the famous "millenary" petition, containing a great number of objections and proposed alterations. In order to consider these, a conference was held at HAMPTON COURT, in January, 1604. The changes agreed to at this conference were principally the addition of the words "or remission of sins" to the title of the absolution; the insertion of forms of thanksgiving for particular occasions; some alterations in the Calendar and in the rubrics of the Office of Private Baptism: and the addition to the Catechism of the Second Part on the Sacraments, which is commonly attributed to Bishop Overal. During the later years of the reign of Charles I., some further changes were in agitation, but were not carried out.

After the death of Charles, an ordinance of Parliament in 1645 interdicted, under severe penalties, the Book of Common Prayer, and established in its stead the "Directory for the Public Worship of God in the Three Kingdoms." Henceforth to use the Book of Common Prayer in any "public place of worship, or in any private place or family within the kingdom," was punished by fines and imprisonment.

But the restoration of Charles II. brought back liberty of conscience and freedom of worship to members of the Church; and on 10th May, 1660, the "Common Prayer" was read again before the Lords. In March, 1661, a



commission was issued, authorizing twelve of the bishops, together with twelve Presbyterian divines, assisted by nine assessors upon either side, to review the Liturgy, and "to make such reasonable alterations as should be agreed on." This is known as the "Savoy Conference," from having been held in the Bishop of London's rooms in the Savoy Hospital. On the 20th December, 1661, the BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER AS IT NOW STANDS WAS adopted, and subscribed by the clergy of both Houses of Convocation and of both the English provinces; and the Act of Uniformity, under which it was established, passed both Houses of Parliament, and received the royal assent in the spring of 1662.\*

It is impossible to enter briefly into the points discussed between the Churchmen and Nonconformists at this conference; and therefore I must for these refer the reader to books of fuller information.

We cannot admire the tone of the disputants on either side. Less captiousness on the one side, less unconciliating curtness on the other, might have been better for the Church; though it is due to the bishops to say, that no concession short of permitting unbounded license to each individual minister would have satisfied the Puritans.

Among the most important of the alterations introduced at this last review were—the insertion of the "Preface," drawn up by Bishop Sanderson; the appoint-

\* Certain printed copies were examined by special commissioners and certified under the great seal. These are known as the *Scaled Books*. The original MS. which was annexed to the Act is missing.

ment of the Communion Service to be used on the first day of Lent; the addition of the prayer for the Parliament and that "*for all sorts and conditions of men,*" of the General Thanksgiving, and some new Collects. Some amendments in the Baptismal Office were also made, and a new Office for the administration of Baptism to those in riper years was provided, in consequence of the neglect of religious ordinances, through the growth of Anabaptism under the Commonwealth; and also as being "useful for the baptizing of natives in our plantations, and others converted to the faith."\*

The Irish Church Convocation examined and approved this Book, and its use was enjoined by the Irish Houses of Parliament in 1666.

A further revision of the Prayer-Book was formally attempted in the reign of William and Mary, under the direction of Patrick, Beveridge, Tillotson, and Stillingfleet, in conference with Baxter and other Nonconformists, but it proved unsuccessful.

The history of our Prayer-Book clearly shows how idle and unbased is the common Romish taunt, that ours is a "parliamentary" religion. The services of our Church were drawn up under the sanction of royal authority by the regularly constituted ministers and governors of the Church; and, having been first adopted by the Houses of Convocation, were accepted and established by the Parliament; which then, be it remembered, consisted of lay members of the Church. It is quite true that

\* Preface to the Book of Common Prayer.

there are certain privileges and endowments which are secured by law to the Church, regarded as an ecclesiastical establishment. But this is a matter of course ; for these could not be possessed except by the law of the land ; “and it is therefore by law alone that the Roman Catholic religion itself possesses in various countries privileges and endowments. You will remember, in the English history, that when Queen Mary wished to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion in England, she took just the same measures for that purpose as King Edward had taken to establish Protestantism ; she got Parliament to repeal his Acts, and pass others giving various privileges and endowments to the clergy in communion with the Pope. The Roman Catholic establishment was then quite as much parliamentary as the Protestant establishment is now.”\* After all, therefore, dependence on the civil power, even if the taunt were as true with regard to Protestantism as it is the reverse, is not one which Rome or Romanists can very *consistently* bring forward.

It was, of course, not intended by the compilers of our services that they should be *stereotyped*, and it may be fairly conceded that changes of circumstances and of the English language have made some alterations desirable ; but it may be also doubted whether, in the present state of parties, such alterations would be dispassionately enough considered to be wisely made. Some shortening of our service by the omission of a few unnecessary

\* Cautions for the Times, No. 1.

repetitions, and the introduction of greater freedom and variety, by arranging some additional forms for occasional use, compiled from the materials of the present Prayer-Book, are alterations about which less disputation would arise. But on the whole, perhaps, the good of change would not be unmixed, nor weigh against the evil. The limits of the proposed alterations ought to be at least definitely agreed on, before the alterations themselves come to be particularly considered. For under the guise of a revision of the Prayer-Book what many really wish for is, a (supposed) *reformation* of the doctrines of the Church. These objects should be honestly distinguished, if a revision is ever to be agreed to. Meanwhile, it would be well if all men—Churchmen and Dissenters—would seriously try to ascertain and understand the meaning of the Prayer-Book as it is, instead of cavilling, as many do, at forms and expressions which are in nine cases out of ten entirely misapprehended by the objectors. And those who do object ought fairly to consider, that no human form or system can ever be devised which shall be free from all objections, or what will be regarded as such by some. Perhaps, however, if an exact aggregate collection could be made of the extemporaneous prayers which are offered on any one Sunday, in the several congregations of the empire in which such prayers are used, it would be confessed that infinitely more objections lay against the use of *no set forms*, than can be brought together against this form, or almost any other that exists. And no more forcible argument would probably be required to convince all scriptural

and sober-minded Christians of the safeguard and blessing which such a Liturgy as ours affords. Moreover, in respect of much that was really good and sound in such a collection, many persons, I think, would be surprised to find upon examination how largely this was due to our Liturgy; how very widely approval is given to our Church forms, not perhaps in the way of express commendation, but in a way which is even stronger, if not quite as honest—by the appropriation and adoption of them. For my own part, having subscribed my conscientious assent to the Book of Common Prayer as it now stands, I am glad that I am one of those who can unreservedly and heartily say, in the words of the Preface, that “we are fully persuaded in our judgments (and we here profess it to the world) that the book doth not contain in it anything contrary to the word of God, or to sound doctrine; or which a godly man may not with a good conscience use and submit unto; or which is not fairly defensible against any that shall oppose the same; if it shall be allowed such just and favourable construction as in common equity ought to be allowed to all human writings, especially such as are set forth by authority, and even to the very best translations of Holy Scripture itself.”

#### NOTE A.

"Our Reformers were guided by primitive practice without reference to the principles of continental reformers; yet if any one individual more than another exercised any influence, that person was not John Calvin, but Martin Bucer, whose views were moderate and reasonable. . . . There were, of course, men in England who would have preferred Calvin to Bucer in this great work; but though they were men of the Reformation period, yet they were not among the Reformers and had no hand in the matter. The recently published letters\* reveal many secrets in these important transactions, and afford abundant evidence that Calvin's opinions did not influence our Reformers."—Lathbury's *Hist. of the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 46, 47.

\* Published by the Parker Society.

## LECTURE I.

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### ON THE ADVANTAGES OF FORMS, AND ON THE PRAYER-BOOK CALENDAR.

---

I THESS. V. 21.

*“Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.”*

To carry out this general precept of the Apostle in a particular case nearly interesting ourselves, I purpose in this and some succeeding Lectures to direct your attention to our BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

I invite you to “prove all things” relating to those forms and devotional exercises in which we are all accustomed to take part, in order that, having searched their meaning and compared them with the Scriptures, we may “hold fast” what such an inquiry and comparison will, I think, show us to be “good”—that we may understand and value that “form of sound words” which our fathers in the Christian faith have handed down to us.

The book which we are about to examine is called “the Book of *Common* Prayer;” that is, of joint or *united* prayer; for that is the meaning of the word common here.\*

\* “Our common supplications,” Prayer of St. Chrysostom (“common and concordant”—κοινὰς καὶ συμφώνους προσευχάς).

It is, you know, to such united prayer that our Lord promises especially a blessing—"If two of you shall *agree* on earth as touching anything that ye shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."\* And this is the great advantage of having certain FORMS of prayer; they are a help to Christians thus to "agree together" in what they mean to ask of God.

May we not say they are a *necessary* help to this? Assuredly, the substance of the petition must, at the least, be known beforehand, if those who hear it are to agree in offering it up. For take the case of an extemporaneous prayer. Understand, first, I do not mean by this prayer without book merely,—for such a prayer may be (as in many churches) repeated so often that it becomes familiar to the congregation, ceases to be extemporaneous, and is in fact a form, although unwritten. But take the case of prayer which is, strictly speaking, extemporaneous, and new to the hearers; and I think that, if we are accustomed to examine our own feelings honestly, we shall generally have observed that in listening to such a petition we have been rather *overhearing* another person pray, than praying ourselves. It is almost, perhaps altogether, impossible that this should be otherwise; not knowing what is about to be asked, we find ourselves listening to each sentence as it is uttered; before adopting it and making it our own, we have first to decide on the propriety of the petition; we find ourselves either approving or disapproving the doctrine which is conveyed;

\* Matthew, xviii. 19.



unintentionally criticising the phraseology in which the prayer is expressed ; and so, when our hearts ought to be sending up to God some supplication “*agreed on*,” the danger is lest our intellect and judgment should rather be busied in determining whether we *can* agree or not in what is asked in our name ; thus we become critical auditors rather than joint petitioners—and the spirit of prayer is apt to be lost while the terms of it are being considered and settled by the hearers.

At the same time the interest of novelty deceives us, perhaps, into the belief that we are really joining ; we are *attending* to the prayer because it is new, but all the while we may not have been really *praying*. It may be true that the thoughts and the attention are less liable to wander in listening to a novel prayer, than to one which is familiar ; but for this very reason we are more likely to be deceived in supposing ourselves devotionally engaged when we have not been so.

The circumstance of our attending is, in some sort, a test of a real devotional interest in the case of a familiar form, while in the other case it is at least much less so. But we may easily mistake that kind of interest, excitement, or sustained attention which are the mere result of newness and variety, for genuine devotion and religious feeling.\*

\* “The poor man is most healthful whose labour procures him both appetite and digestion, who seldom changeth his dish, yet finds a relish in it and a new strength from it every day. And so it is with the sober and industrious Christian, who, busying himself in serving God, gets daily a new sense of his wants, and consequently a fresh

In addition to these considerations, a well-prepared Liturgy is exempt from other disadvantages which, generally speaking, belong more or less to extemporary prayer.

In the case of the latter, the people are dependent upon the piety, ability, orthodoxy, taste, judgment, experience (and even state of health), of their minister, and on the *union* of all these qualifications in him. But it is rarely that so many gifts and qualifications are combined in any one man; and so it is rarely to be expected that the prayers offered will so fitly or so uniformly represent the feelings of a congregation, as forms which have been thoughtfully selected, and carefully compiled from the best sources.

And there are dangers to the minister, as well as to the people, in the use of extemporary prayers.

The minister is in much danger of making what should be an appeal to God an address to the congregation; a sermon rather than a prayer; a means of conveying to his hearers under the form of a prayer those doctrines and sentiments which he most wishes to impress upon their minds.\* It is a natural thing for him to do, but

stomach to those holy forms which are never flat or dull to him that brings new affections to them every day. It is the epicure, the crammed lazy wanton, or the diseased man, that needs *quelques choses* or sauces to make this daily bread desirable. And if this be our temper, it is a sign of a diseased soul, and an effect of our surfeiting on holy things."—Dean Comber's Companion to the Temple. Preface.

\* See Cautions for the Times, No. XXIV. The phrase one some-

it is not a safe thing ; for if he is only *delivering an exhortation*, and the people listening to it, he is hurtfully deceiving himself and his hearers, if he and they are led into mistaking for a prayer what is really only an hortatory discourse.

There are other dangers to the minister in the public use of extemporary prayer\*—(for it is of this *public*, congregational use that I am speaking)—but I shall not dwell upon them now. I have said enough, perhaps, to convince you of the advantages of forms—of their necessity indeed to common or united prayer.

Having done this, need I go back to prove their lawfulness ?

If so, I might remind you of the antiquity of prescribed forms in the Christian Church ; for many of our prayers are taken from very ancient Liturgies, and have come down to us from the earliest days of Christianity.

times hears, “an impressive prayer,” betrays this notion of an address to the human hearers.

\* “We refer to the case of ministers who possess more than ordinary abilities ; and who, if in their sermons they are sometimes exposed to the danger of preaching themselves, and not Christ Jesus, must feel the same temptation in even a more dangerous degree in the case of their public prayers. It is bad enough if, in a sermon, a preacher, instead of thinking how he may benefit his hearers, thinks how he may attract their admiration ; but it is surely worse if a clergyman offering *prayer* be led away from thinking of God to think of his hearers—if he be tempted, instead of praying, to exhibit ‘a gift of prayer ;’ and if, while professing to humble himself before God, his mind be occupied in seeking for eloquent terms in which to make his professions of humility.”—*Ibid.*

I might remind you that the Jewish Church used forms, and that our Lord and his Apostles sanctioned this usage. He, himself, as you remember, supplied his disciples (and that too, it has been said, from Jewish forms already existing\*) with a form of prayer expressed in the plural number, and evidently intended for joint worship.† He uses the language of the Psalms often in social prayer with his disciples, and in his own devotions; and in so doing He sanctioned the use of pre-composed petitions.

Upon these various grounds our Church has wisely given us forms of prayer.

But some persons argue against Liturgies, Catechisms, Creeds, Articles, and all Church formularies, upon the ground that things of this sort are not found in Scripture.

- A little attention, however, will shew you some of the reasons which account for this omission, as well as

\* "It is very observable that our Lord Jesus Christ himself...did not frame an entirely new prayer...but took out of the ancient Eucharisties or prayer-books of the Jews what was good and laudable in them, and out of them composed that prayer. The very preface of the Lord's Prayer, 'Our Father which art in heaven,' was the usual preface of the Jewish prayers; and all the following petitions are to be found, almost in the very same words, in their prayer-books."—Bishop Bull. He refers for proofs to the notes of Grotius on Matt. vi. 9, &c. The Rev. F. Procter speaks of this prayer as a summary of the fixed daily prayers of the Jewish Synagogues, page 210, third edition.

† Luke, xi. 2. Our Lord had given this prayer before [Matt. vi. 9]. But there, apparently, (1) for private use, and (2) as a model —

the advantages resulting from it. In the first place, the works of the New Testament, as we now have them, *i. e.* the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, were written for *Christians*, that is, for persons who may be supposed to have been already orally instructed in the rudiments of the Christian faith, and who had been admitted members of the Church; and, secondly, any documents of the sort would have been quite out of keeping with the unsystematic character of the New Testament Scriptures.

It may be asked, however, why did not the Apostles write other books or records containing such directions as to forms, articles of faith, &c.?

One reason, quite sufficient, may be given for the omission, and it is one that proves the superhuman wisdom by which the sacred writers were directed. If the hymns and forms of prayer, and Church regulations, &c., which the Apostles used had been recorded, these would have been thought to have as much authority as any other parts of Scripture; and even if the Apostles had distinctly and repeatedly declared that it would be lawful to alter them as circumstances might require, men would have most scrupulously insisted, notwithstanding, on adhering to them with superstitious reverence, even where differences of country, and times, and manners, made them no longer the most suitable.

The ritual of the Jews was intended, as you know, "*After this manner*; &c." Here, (1) for joint use, and (2) as a set form—"When ye pray, say," &c. His disciples were asking to be taught a form of prayer, "as John also had taught his disciples."

for one nation and one country; and it was meant only to be temporary; therefore it was absolutely fixed, and accurately described in all its parts. But the Christian religion was for all times, all nations, and all kinds of persons; and therefore Christians were left free in respect of those points where differences would not only be desirable, but even, in some instances, unavoidable. Take, for example, the single case of Catechisms. Although the Christian religion is itself always one and the same, it is impossible that any one mode of introducing its truths should be the best adapted for children and adults, for the civilized and the barbarian, and for all other varieties of time, country, intellectual culture, and natural capacity. So in respect of Church formularies generally. "Each Church was left, through the wise foresight of Him who alone 'knows what is in man,' to provide for its own wants as they should arise; to steer its own course by the chart and compass which His holy Word supplies, regulating for itself the sails and rudder according to the winds and currents it may meet with."\*

But observe how very strongly this omission of which I am speaking proves that our sacred writers were guided by a superhuman wisdom. Left to themselves, they could not have foreseen all this. Acting on unassisted human judgment, they would have been sure to prescribe minutely all those details of forms and rules which most men wish to have.

\* See Cautions for the Times, No. XXV. I have quoted sometimes the very words of this number, and those of No. X., in what follows on the Calendar.

For men circumstanced as the Apostles and their fellow-labourers it would have been peculiarly natural to do so, and it is only what we might have expected of them. For they were Jews. They were themselves accustomed to an exact and definite ritual; habit, experience, and human calculation would have all led them to construct and leave on record a Christian ritual of the same sort. That men brought up in Judaism should all have agreed in a course directly and significantly the very opposite of this—the very reverse of what was at all natural or likely—is a clear proof of a restraining and directing guidance.

“The particular forms of Divine Worship and the Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things in their own nature indifferent, and alterable, and so acknowledged, it is reasonable that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigency of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein as to those that are in place of authority should, from time to time, seem either necessary or expedient.” Thus wisely and temperately speaks the “preface” to our Prayer-book. And again, speaking “of ceremonies, why some be abolished and some retained,” our Reformers say, with a sensible and Christian moderation—“In these our doings we condemn no other nations, nor prescribe anything but to our own people only: for we think it convenient that every country should use such ceremonies as they shall think best to the setting forth of God’s honour and glory, and to the reducing of the people to a most per-

fect and godly living, without error or superstition ; and that they should put away other things, which from time to time they perceive to be most abused, as in men's ordinances it often chanceth diversely in divers countries."

But, to pass on to our subject, I wish first to say something with regard to the **CALENDAR** which is prefixed to the Prayer-Book. You will find persons who object to the observance of Church holy-days, especially of what are termed Saints'-days. And they condemn these observances as "popish." But this is almost always because they mistake the nature and design of such holy-days. They speak of them as if they were *dedicated* to those holy persons ;—observed in a religious honour of them. But this is not the case.

It is expressly disclaimed in the very Act which first fixed the observance of those days after the Reformation : — "The times appointed specially for the same are called holy-days, not for the matter or nature either of the time or day, *nor for any of the saints' sake* whose memories are had on those days (for so all days and times considered are God's creatures, and all of like holiness) but for the nature and condition of those godly and holy works wherewith only God is to be honoured and the congregation edified, whereunto such times and days are sanctified and hallowed—this is to say, separated from all profane uses, and dedicated and appointed *not unto any saint or creature, but only unto God* and his true worship."\*

\* Statute of Edward VI. 5 and 6, c. 8.



The design of the Church is simply then to fix those special times for bringing before our minds the good examples and inspired teaching of some of the most eminent servants of Christ, and to exhort us to be followers of them so far as they were "followers of Christ." If their lives and doctrines are recorded in the Bible, we know that they "were written for our learning." It is simply to the Scripture record—to subjects which we know to be profitable, because the Spirit of God has commended them to our meditation—that the Church directs our thoughts upon these days.\*

If we object, therefore, to the insertion of these biographies and holy lessons in our Church-services, why should we not also object to their insertion in the Bible? and if we would choose useful subjects for our thoughtful study, how can we find a better guide in choosing them than the Scriptures themselves supply? †

It has been said that our Church observes two festivals in honour of the Virgin Mary. But this is a total mistake. On the feast of the "ANNUNCIATION OF (or as we should say in modern English "to") THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY," it is not to *her*, but to the Incarnation of CHRIST, declared by the message of the angel, that the

\* Let any objector only read the Collects appointed for these days, and he will see their real design and use.

† We have seen persons who would censure the use of the admirable collect for "St. Bartholomew's Day" as "popish," or "semi-popish," observing the same day as a "bicentary commemoration" of men whose claim to be counted with him, among "the noble army of martyrs" is, to say the least, *not proven*.

Collect directs our thoughts; and the other festival is expressly described as "The PRESENTATION OF CHRIST in the Temple, *commonly called* the Purification of the Virgin Mary:" of the former of these subjects alone the Collect speaks. The example of the Blessed Virgin is indeed a most profitable subject of meditation; but the Church seems to have avoided, for obvious reasons, commemorating her by any special day set apart for that purpose.

But in the Calendar, which follows the Table of Lessons, you find days marked by the names of persons never mentioned in the Scriptures, and of events which are recorded only in legends and superstitious fables; and this has sometimes given offence; for Protestants have asked, "Are we, the members of the Reformed Church, to hallow the memory of St. Dunstan or of St. Bridget? are we bound to believe in the wonderful achievements of St. George, or the miraculous 'Invention of the Cross'?"

Refusing, with reason, to do this, some have pronounced the Calendar a "relic of popery."

And a relic of popery undoubtedly these days, or the names of them, are; that is to say, if popery never had existed in these countries, neither should these names be found in our Prayer-Books. And just in the same way, it might be said, if heathenism never had existed, there never would have been such names as those by which the days of our week are called. If the Sun and the Moon had not been objects of religious worship, we should have no days called Sunday or Monday. If Woden, Thor, Friga, and Saturn had not been revered,

there would be no days called after them, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. These days, then, or the names of them, are undoubtedly a relic of heathenism. And yet few reasonable men would object to our retaining them as if it were "heathenish" to do so, or manifested any sympathies on our part with the Pagan worship of those deities. It is just so with respect to the days objected to in the Church Calendar.

Whatever may be meant by those strange names that mark them, it is quite plain the Church did not intend to *consecrate* by these the days to which they were attached; because it has added to the Calendar a "Table of all the feasts that are to be observed throughout the year;" and among these the days in question are not reckoned.

The reason, however, why those names appear in the Calendar is easily explained.

The Calendar was drawn up not only to mark the Psalms and Lessons for each day, but to answer for what we call an "ALMANAC." Accordingly, you find in it not only the Roman division of the months, by Calends, Nones, and Ides—for the convenience of scholars writing in Latin—but also the position of the sun in the signs of the Zodiac, the beginning and ending of the dog-days, the time when the judges sate at Westminster, and so forth.

Now the people before the Reformation had been accustomed to reckon birth-days, fairs, sessions, terms of leases, servants' wages, and so on, by the old saints'-days, in the same way as we still count by "Hilary,"

"Lady-day," and "Michaelmas." And it would have been very inconvenient, if all notice of those days had been struck out of that which served them as their only almanac.

In an old Latin Prayer-Book of Queen Elizabeth's time, this reason is expressly given; these names are said to be added, "in order to serve as marks of certain things, the proper seasons of which it is important to know, and which it would be inconvenient not to be made aware of."\*

With regard to the Table of days of fasting or abstinence I do not mean to enter here into the general question which they suggest. I will only remark that the compilers of the Prayer-Book seem rather to have permitted and sanctioned the continued observance of these days, than enjoined them by way of positive ordinance.

We certainly do not find any such express directions given by them as to the *mode* or the *degree* of abstinence, as might naturally have been expected to accompany an *ordinance*. If you refer to the second part of the Homily on Fasting, you will see that the only definite rule upon this matter, was a political and not a religious one; the use of fish on certain days, rather than flesh, was pre-

\* These days, excepting a few, were omitted in the First and Second Books of Edward VI., but restored in the reign of Queen Elizabeth on the grounds stated above. The name "O Sapientia," attached to December 16, is from the beginning of an Anthem sung in the Latin Church, in honour of Christ's Advent, from this day till Christmas eve.

scribed solely for the protection of the *fishing interests*—“upon policy, not respecting any religion at all in the same”—“in consideration of the maintaining of fisher-towns bordering upon the seas, and for the increase of fishermen, of whom do spring mariners to go upon the sea, to the furnishing of the navy of the realm.”\* The observance of these regulations being enacted by the civil law under severe penalties, it was thought right and necessary that due notice of these days should be publicly given every Sunday to the people; and this accordingly was appointed to be done in the Communion Service. But when those legal penalties dropped out of use, the public notices came to be read less generally; and at the present day are seldom given out in Church.

There were, however, very many persons at the time of the Reformation, who (with probably most of the Reformers themselves) believed fasting to be a duty of the Gospel dispensation, and binding upon all Christians. There are many who think so still, both in our own, and several others of the reformed Churches.

Judging the Prayer-Book, therefore, with reference to the times when it was framed, and to the variety of opinions which even then existed on this subject, our Reformers could not perhaps have done otherwise or better than they did.

They give a list of those days of abstinence which it had been customary to observe, but the degree and manner of observing them they leave quite optional. They

\* See Note B, appended to this Lecture.

could not have left them out altogether, without compromising the judgment of those among themselves who felt that they ought to be retained, or without giving offence to many sincere Christians, who held fasting to be an important means of grace; while at the same time they refrain from enforcing the observance of them as an ordinance, by any definite or positive injunctions, lest they should thereby seem to impose restraint upon the Christian liberty of others.

While, therefore, those who practise fasting have upon their side the sanction, nay, even the recommendation of the Church of those days—of our Reformers, I mean, and their contemporaries—still it does seem that we should be going beyond them—beyond our Church, and certainly beyond New Testament authority—if we *enjoined* fasting as a necessary duty, as a matter of obligation, absolutely and in the same manner extending to all persons.\* Only I would say, brethren, on this and on all

\* Differences of climate and constitution would have made any express scriptural rule on fasting difficult of universal observance. And does it not appear that, if fasting had been ever intended as a means to mortify carnal desires, it would have been appointed to be used in times of *prosperity*, when most the heart is lifted up and most needs humbling? But the Jews fasted in time of affliction, and as an expression of *sorrow*. It is, like tears, a natural expression of it; “be afflicted—mourn and weep.” David says, “My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass, so that I *forget* to eat my bread.” [Psalm cii. 4]. Comp. Psalm cvii. 18. Thus also our Lord’s question, “Can ye make the children of the bridechamber *fast*?” (St. Luke and St. Mark), is in St. Matt. [ix. 15], “Can the children of the bridechamber

such questions, "let us not judge one another any more," nor lose our charity in "doubtful disputations." What the Apostle Paul says in the fourteenth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, applies to this as well as to all things indifferent.

"He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks."

"Let not him that eateth despise [as being superstitious] him that eateth not, and let not him which eateth not, judge [as being indifferent and lax] him that eateth."

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." And "he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God and approved of men."

*mona*?" Of what follows Dean Alford truly observes, "These words are not a declaration of a duty, or of an ordinance, as binding on the church in the days of her Lord's absence . . . but they declare that in those days they shall have real *occasion* for fasting—sorrow enough: see John xvi. 20."

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NOTE B.

"By which positive laws though we subjects, for certain times and days appointed, be restrained from some kinds of meats and drink which God by his holy word hath left free to be taken and used of all men, with thanksgiving, in all places, and at all times; yet for that such laws of princes and other magistrates are not made to put holiness in one kind of meat and drink more than another, but *are grounded merely on policy*, all subjects are bound to keep them by God's commandment, who by the Apostle willeth all without exception to submit themselves unto the authority of the higher powers

And in this point concerning our duties which be here dwelling in England, environed with the sea, as we be, we have great occasion in reason to take the commodities of the water, which Almighty God by his divine providence hath laid so nigh unto us, whereby the increase of victuals upon the land may the better be spared and cherished, to the sooner reducing of victuals to a more moderate price, to the better sustenance of the poor. And doubtless he seemeth to be too dainty an Englishman, who, considering the great commodities which may ensue, will not forbear some piece of his licentious appetite upon the ordinance of his prince, with the consent of the wise of the realm. What good English heart would not wish that the old ancient glory should return to the realm, wherein it hath with great commendation excelled before our days, in the furniture of the navy of the same? What will more daunt the hearts of the adversaries than to see us well fenced and armed on the sea as we be reported to be on the land? If the prince requested our obedience to forbear one day from flesh more than we do, and to be contented with one meal in the same day, should not our own commodity thereby persuade us to subjection?

“But now that two meals be permitted on that day to be used, which sometime our elders in very great numbers in the realm did use with one only spare meal, and that in fish only; shall we think it so great a burden that is prescribed?”—*Second Part of the Homily on Fasting.*

There is a statute, too, of Queen Elizabeth,\* imposing similar abstinence, which expressly enacts that whosoever shall publicly declare ‘that any eating of fish or forbearing of flesh, mentioned therein, is of any necessity for the saving of the soul of man, or that it is the service of God any otherwise than as other politick laws are and be, that then such persons shall be punished as the spreaders of false news are and ought to be.’—*Act, Elizabeth, 5.*

\* See Cautions, No. X.



## LECTURE II.

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### THE ORDER FOR MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER.

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EXODUS xii. 26.

*“What mean ye by this service?”*

WE begin to-day with the “Order for Morning Prayer.”

In the arrangement of this service there is a regular, consecutive instruction, and a suggestive meaning, which I will endeavour to point out. Originally the service commenced with the Lord's Prayer; but it was felt that this was too abrupt a beginning; that the minds of worshippers required some previous preparation; needed, as it were, to be brought into tone; and so the present opening was substituted in the reign of Edward VI.\* The service—as it has stood since then—begins with the reading of one or more sentences of Scripture. The passages selected bear generally upon these two subjects: first, the duty of repentance on our part; and, secondly, God's promises and invitations to all who come to Him confessing sin, with a true penitent heart, and conscious of their need.† “As for me,” said David, “I will come into

\* A. D. 1552.

† If two or more sentences are read, the clergyman will commonly select them with a regard to this general division.

thy house upon the multitude of thy mercy ; and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.”\* And this is just the spirit which this introduction breathes into the Christian worshipper. The sentences are chosen so as to suit every variety of case—to meet the penitent with the exact expression of his feelings, as e. g. the 3rd, the 7th, and 10th; to rouse the unconverted, as the 1st and 8th; to warn the self-deceiving, as the 2nd and 11th; to reprove the formalist, as the 5th; and to comfort the desponding, as the 4th, 6th, and 9th.†

There is one clause in the last sentence (from 1 John, i. 9,) which it may be well to notice particularly. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” What does the expression mean, “*just* to forgive?” Is it not mercy rather than justice which we speak of as being concerned with forgiveness? Yes, the promise of God is “Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy,”‡ and that because “the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin.” But God is faithful to His own gracious promise. He was not bound to make that promise; but now that He has made it, He is too righteous in His own nature, too just in his dealings with man, not to fulfil it to those who seek it through Christ Jesus—to whom, being accepted in the Beloved, “there is now no condemnation.” God is “just both to

\* Psalm v. 7.

† The American Prayer-Book prefixes also Psalm xix. 14; Mal. i. 11; and (not so appropriately) Hab. ii. 20.

‡ Prov. xxviii. 13.

forgive and cleanse," simply because He has for Christ's sake freely promised to do both.\*

In coming before God we have from Him in His own words the very promise that we need; for pardon and help are the two blessings that we chiefly want. If God is ready to bestow on us through Christ these two great gifts, the sum of all—the forgiving and the cleansing—shall He not freely give us all things that we need? And He does pledge us these, and in these all things whatsoever we shall ask, believing. We come as lowly suitors into the presence of our King, and, like the Eastern monarch of whom Old Testament story tells us, He stretches out the golden sceptre in token of acceptance, and seems to welcome us on our entrance with words of gracious salutation, "What wilt thou? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee."

The minister then connects together these two things—God's promises and our duty—and enforces both in a preparatory Exhortation.

In this address you find the objects of our public worship described under five general divisions.† We assemble and meet together, "*to acknowledge our sins before God,*" as we do in the General Confession and many of the supplications; "*to render thanks for the great benefits we have received,*" as we do in the Te Deum and

\* Compare the parallel expression in one of the offertory sentences [Heb. vi. 10], "God is not *unrighteous* to forget your work," &c.

† The beginning of this Exhortation closely resembles a passage in a sermon of Avitus, Bishop of Vienne, in Gaul, in the 5th century. See Palmer's Orig. Lit., ch. i., p. 1., sect. iii.

General Thanksgiving; "*to set forth God's most worthy praise,*" as in the Psalms, Hymns, and Doxologies; "*to hear his most holy word,*" as in the Psalms, Hymns, Lessons, Epistle, and Gospel; and, fifthly, "*to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul,*" which we do in the Litany and other Prayers.

After this Exhortation comes the General Confession. It was called so in contradistinction to those *particular* confessions which individual penitents had been required heretofore to make in private. Instead of these separate "acts of contrition" (as they were styled), our Reformers appointed a public and general form "to be said of the whole congregation;" and this is expressed in general terms, because it refers to failings which all men share, which all therefore may and should confess.

It must speak generally, if all the members of the congregation are to speak through it in sincerity and truth. It could not go into particulars without specifying sins of which some present might not have been guilty, and so incurring the danger of tempting men to unreality and hollowness in their devotions. It is for us, however—for each of us—to *individualize* this general acknowledgment—to bear in mind the faults by which we have ourselves offended, our omissions and misdoings; for, brethren, it is our own personal consciousness of sin, and this only, which really brings us to an humble, lowly, and penitent spirit.\* This General Confession is

\* In the confessions of the Calvinistic rituals the *original* corruption of our nature is deplored. Our Reformers omit this subject, and confine themselves to the confession of *actual* sins of omission and commission.

the united voice of many hearts, each knowing its own bitterness; each, under the pressure of its own necessities, crying for itself—so taught to cry for others too—“We have erred and strayed from thy ways; spare us; restore us; grant that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life.”

Observe that this confession is to be “said of [by] the *whole congregation* after the minister.” How different our public worship would be from what it is, if here and elsewhere this direction were complied with!

How much I wish that even for once the many voices in this congregation could be brought to unite together in audible prayer and praise!

Because I think, my Christian friends, that if this were done once, you would not need to be persuaded to it any more; you would all feel the difference so much that you would do it always. The service would seem to you—and *be*—so much more interesting, more life-like, and real than it had ever been before, that you would of yourselves keep up the habit.

Then, indeed, a stranger coming into our congregation might report that God was among us of a truth; and he would see that we really believed it. But, as things are, how lifeless and cold our service too commonly appears, compared at least to what it should be! It is no wonder if public worship seems cold, when forms intended for the use of all are gone through by two persons only out of a large number. Just try one of Handel’s soul-stirring choruses as a duet or solo, and what will be the effect? We do a worse injustice by our Liturgy.

And very great is our loss ; as great as our fault is. I am sure the evil of this comes back upon ourselves—on all of us, both ministers and people. We know how strongly sympathy affects us ; how our own earnestness is either increased or chilled by the behaviour of others round us ; and if we hear no sound of prayer on any side ; if all around us seem unconcerned spectators, or hearers only of a worship that is not theirs—that is but offered *for*, not *by* them—it is impossible that our own devotion should not be chilled and checked. By an apparently, if not a really, apathetic silence, Christians put a decided hindrance both in their own and in their brother's way.

Let us of the Protestant Reformed Church look to this matter. We do not make such appeals to the outward senses as other Churches do ; but we must not forget that men *have* senses, and feeling, and imagination, and natural human sympathies ; that all these must be won over to religion ; that through these the majority of men are, in fact, attracted to one form of religion or another. Through these let us attract them to a true religion, and a sound sober form of worship. Sobriety, surely, need not be dull. A “reasonable” service may be a “living” service as well. I would not add a single form, a single grace of attitude, gesture, or ornament, to what our Prayer-Book warrants ; but I would make our service all that it was meant to be, and that it might be if our people would.

And I believe, for my part, that there is infinitely more to touch and stir the heart in a truly congregational

worship, than any merely material aids can furnish; that there is more to awaken real devotional feeling in the blended sound of many human voices uniting heartily in the simplest words of prayer and praise, than we could find in any decorative pomp or outward ceremonial.

But sometimes the service is left to be performed between the minister and the clerk, while the people remain nearly silent. Yet every where throughout the Prayer-Book it is the *people* who are directed to make the responses. There is no mention anywhere in the book of such an officer as a parish-clerk, except only in the Office of Matrimony,\* and then not in connexion with the religious part of the service. And the custom of employing one person as a deputy for the people has tended, I believe, more than anything else to the disuse of congregational responding.

Try then to make our public service life-like and real, as it was meant to be, by taking your own part in it; and let me give you these two hints with regard to this duty of audibly responding: first, as to the right *places*; secondly, as to the *manner*.

1. As to the places. Consult always the directions in the Prayer-Book.

These rules (called "rubrics," because originally printed in *red* letters for distinction's sake) are intended as much for the direction of the people as for the minister.†

\* Last rubric at "THE ESPOUSALS." "The clerks" elsewhere mean clerks in holy orders, i. e. clergymen.

† The Exhortation, Absolution, and Commandments, &c., are some-

2. Read the responses in a tone just loud enough to be heard distinctly by yourself, but not so loud as to disturb your neighbours.

When all have joined in acknowledgment of sin, the "Absolution or Remission of sins" is then "*pronounced by the priest alone, standing*;" that is, by him alone, in contradistinction to the people; he only is to speak it, not the people with him; they remain kneeling in silence.

Being a solemn public declaration, it is appointed to be read by the Minister of the senior order; that is, the Priest, or, as the word means, Presbyter or Elder.\* At least the rubric so implies, if we interpret it historically; for in order to mark this, and to exclude the Deacon, the word "Priest" was substituted for "Minister" at the last revision of the Prayer-Book; and it

times inconsiderately repeated with the minister. One might as well repeat aloud the sermon.

Strictly speaking, there is also a distinction in the rubrics as to repeating each clause "*after*" the minister (as in the General Confession) and "*with*" him—simultaneously—(as in the Lord's Prayer, &c.); but the distinction is not universally observed; seldom except when the prayers are intoned.

\* Presbyter (πρεσβύτερος) abbreviated into "Prester," and that again contracted into "Priest." It was unfortunate that the translators of the Bible should have taken the same English word to represent also another term, quite different in etymology and meaning; *Greek*, Hiererus; *Latin*, Sacerdos. This latter is the proper designation of the *sacrificing* order under the Jewish dispensation; but under the new covenant it belongs strictly to Christ alone—the end and antitype of the whole Jewish priesthood—the ONE PRIEST under the Gospel; and it is applied also in the New Testament to believers ge-



seems right to comply with the rule according to the 41 known intention of its framers, even though absolutely or definitely worded. It is certain, <sup>he</sup> that the terms Minister and Priest are often used miscuously in our Prayer-Book;\* and it is equally certain that in this "form of absolution" (or "Declaration of Absolution," as the American Prayer-Book has it) there is no assumption whatever of any sacerdotal function, and that it cannot on any ground of this sort be restricted to the Priest. It is simply a solemn declaration of God's pardon to each penitent believer; and so far as the words go, there is nothing in them which might not be said by any minister, nothing at all stronger than is declared in the pulpit by every minister—Deacon or Priest—who repeats the promises made in the Gospel to repentant sinners.†

nerally; but then only in a secondary, figurative meaning—to all Christians as such, not to any peculiar class or order.

\* See particularly the Baptismal Services, in many portions of which the Deacon (part of whose office is "in the absence of the priest to baptize infants") would, on a strict interpretation of the rubrics, be excluded from officiating. If it were not therefore for the circumstance of the alteration above referred to, we could not certainly infer from the rubric itself—comparing it with other rubrics—that the Deacon was excluded from reading the Absolution.

† "The people shall answer here and at the end of all other prayers, *Amen*."—Rubric after the absolution. Wherever the word is printed "Amen," in the same type as the preceding part, this is intended to denote that the minister as well as the people is to say it; as e. g. in the Confession, Lord's Prayer, Creeds, and Gloria Patri. Where it is printed in italics, the Minister stops, and the people answer *Amen*.

## LECTURE II.

42 King now confessed our sins; and having heard message of forgiveness from Him who is the Father, our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore our Father too, we are permitted, as reconciled to God through His dear Son, to offer up the "Children's Prayer," and with the spirit of adoption to speak to "Our Father in Heaven" in the words given us by the beloved Son Himself.\*

Then follow these versicles repeated *antiphonally*, that is, in turn, by minister and people: "O Lord, open thou our lips—and our mouth shall show forth thy praise;"—these are the words of David after his confession of sin in the 51st Psalm, verse 15. "O God, make speed to save us; O Lord, make haste to help us"—70th Psalm, 1st verse.

Then, standing up, all join responsively in the Doxology; and the minister invites the people to unite and "praise the Lord," to which they answer—with hearts now prepared and attuned—"the Lord's name be praised."†

And well may this be said by those who have united truly in the first part of the service.

For it well "becometh to be thankful," those who

\* The rubric directs that the Minister shall say this prayer "with an audible voice," because in the matin office of the Sarum Breviary the Priest said it under his breath, not raising his voice until the words "lead us not into temptation," to which the choir responded, "But deliver us from evil."

† This answer, first inserted in the Scotch Prayer-Book (1637) was placed in the English Book at the last revision, in 1661.—*Vide* Procter, p. 213.

from their hearts have cried for mercy, and have received into their hearts God's full assurance of it through Christ Jesus; well may they join in that new-song of thanksgiving which God has put into their mouth—the “Invitatory Psalm”—and say one to another, “O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.”

It is in some churches the custom to open Divine service with a psalm or hymn; but this innovation is scarcely an improvement; it appears to break in upon the order of the service, and somewhat to spoil, by a premature anticipation, the instructive sequence of its meaning. In its present arrangement, nothing could possibly be better calculated to lead us to pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also—to sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also.

To pray with an intelligent attention to the meaning of our words, is our duty, if we would offer to God a “reasonable service;” and so far human explanations may assist you; but, to pray with the *spirit*—this, brethren, is one of the most difficult of Christian duties.

There is One Teacher only who can help us here. The Spirit “alone helpeth our infirmities,”\* making intercession in us; even that ever-present Comforter promised by Him who has gone into the heavens, there to make intercession *for* us.

Do not then, brethren, attempt this, or any work, alone; alone you cannot do it; ask that the Lord who

\* Romans, viii. 26.

“hearkeneth” would also “prepare your heart,”\* by pouring into it the spirit of grace and supplication. Pray in His strength ; and in your greatest weakness remember that you kneel before a throne of grace ; that you have there a faithful and merciful High Priest, whose ear will not refuse to listen to the “prayer of faith,” though it be weak, and sometimes wandering, and worthless in itself.

He “teaches us to pray,” and, blundering, imperfect scholars as we may be, yet, if we are but willing learners, and practise His own lessons in dependence on His promised help, He makes our prayers His own again ; He pleads in our stead ; and for His sake the Father, who Himself hath loved us, will grant all our petitions, and perform the cause we have in hand.

\* Psalm x. 19.

## LECTURE III.

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THE ORDER FOR MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER,  
CONTINUED.

THE PSALMS, LESSONS, AND CANTICLES.

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COLOSSIANS, iii. 16.

*“ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*

WE enter to-day on that part of our public worship in which we “ set forth God’s most worthy praise, and hear His most holy word.” And the latter portion of that “ Invitatory Psalm,” of which I spoke last day, marks very fitly the transition of the service here ; in those monitory words, “ to-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts,” there is contained a very suggestive introduction to the reading of the Psalms and Lessons.

The custom of saying the Psalms (or singing them, as in cathedrals and places where there are choirs,) is very ancient. The Jews had used them largely in their Tem-

ple-service; and in the early Christian Church they were made so familiar by constant repetition, that it is said the poorest Christians used to sing them at their labours, in their houses, and in the fields.

The version of the Psalms in our Prayer-Book is a different one, as you have noticed, from that of our English Bibles. That in the Prayer-Book is taken from the old translation of the Bible, which was revised by Archbishop Cranmer in A. D. 1539. This older version was retained at the last revision of the Prayer-Book for two reasons; first, because, as so few were then able to read, it was desirable to preserve the words with which the people were familiar, in order that they might bear their part in the responses; and, secondly, because the verse in the old Psalter was supposed to run more smoothly, and to be therefore better fitted for chanting.\*

It is from the ancient custom of chanting the Psalms antiphonally, (i. e. in turn) that the established practice is derived,—for which no express direction was thought necessary,—of the minister and people reading them alternately; and a like universal custom leads us also to repeat them standing; all see at once that this is the

\* "Psalm" signifies "a hymn sung to a musical accompaniment." The dots (:) resembling a colon, which divide each verse are merely a musical notation for the use of those who chant the Psalms, but are no guides in reading them. So also in the Canticles, Te Deum, and Athanasian Creed. In the latter, e. g. the passage "perfect God, and perfect man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting," should be read with a pause after the word "God," and none after "man," or only a very slight one.

most reverent and seemly posture during a part of divine worship which chiefly consists of intermingled prayer and praise.

Of the Psalms themselves, their suitability and beauty, need I say much?

Those who know most of their own hearts, those who have lived the longest and most varied life, know best the value, the fulness, and the depth of meaning which the Psalms possess.

And when we recollect how our forefathers in the Church of God—those who waited before for the Hope of Israel, as well as those who have trusted in Him since—have prized and used these sacred hymns; when we remind ourselves how in these very words of God's own teaching, so many million hearts have risen to God's throne from age to age in prayer and praise; how many human sorrows have found a common utterance here; and all men's deepest joys and purest aspirations have found here, too, their common voice and their most fit expression; shall we not thank God for giving us these songs, and for preserving to His Church a gift so precious?

Or, if they need to be still further endeared to us, are they not yet more deeply hallowed by the recollection that from these very Psalms our blessed Lord Himself should have so often quoted, while He dwelt among us? The Psalter, it has been said,\* “appears to have been the manual of the Son of God, in the days of his flesh.” On the

\* Bishop Horne. Preface to Commentary on Psalms. The whole Preface is well worth reading.

same night that He was betrayed, we are told by St. Matthew that "When they had sung an hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olives;" and the hymn was most likely that usually sung by the Jews at the Pass-over Feast, namely, the 115th and 118th Psalms.\* It was in David's words that our Saviour uttered that cry upon the cross," "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and it was in the trustful language of the Psalmist that He breathed out his soul, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."†

There is much, of course, in the Psalms that is peculiarly Jewish; some things essentially so; but the Gospel revelation throws back a flood of light upon these "dark sayings of old;" and the quotations from the Psalms which we find in the New Testament are a key to the spiritual meaning which is contained in most of them. "It may be said, are we concerned with the affairs of David and of Israel? Have we anything to do with the ark and the temple? They are no more. Are we to go up to Jerusalem and to worship on Zion? They are desolated and trodden under foot by the Turks. Are we to sacrifice young bullocks, according to the law? The law is abolished, never to be observed again. Do we pray for victory over Moab, Edom, and Philistia;

\* "The ὕμνος was in all probability the last of the *Hallel* or *Great Hallel*, which consisted of Psalms cxv., cxviii.; the former part (Psalms cxlii., cxiv.) having been sung during the meal."—Dean Alford's note on Matt. xxvi. 30.

† Compare Psalm xxiii. 1, and xxxi. 5, with Matt. xxvii. 46, and Luke, xxiii. 46.



or for deliverance from Babylon? There are no such nations, no such places in the world. What then do we mean, when, taking such expressions into our mouths, we utter them in our own persons, as parts of our devotion, before God? Assuredly we must mean a spiritual Jerusalem and Zion, a spiritual ark and temple, a spiritual law, spiritual sacrifices, and spiritual victories over spiritual enemies; all described under the old names, which are still retained, though 'old things are passed away, and all things are become new.' By substituting Messiah for David, the Gospel for the law, the Church Christian for that of Israel, and the enemies of one for those of the other, the Psalms are made our own." These are the words of Bishop Horne, who, further, says of the Psalms, "Indited under the influence of Him to whom all hearts are known, and events foreknown, they suit all mankind in all situations; grateful as the manna which descended from above, and conformed itself to every palate. The fairest productions of human wit, after a few perusals, like gathered flowers wither in our hands, and lose their fragrancy; but these unfading plants of paradise become, as we are accustomed to them, still more and more beautiful; their bloom appears to be daily heightened; fresh odours are emitted, and new sweets extracted from them. He who hath once tasted their excellence will desire to taste them yet again; and he who tastes them oftenest will relish them best."

The Psalms being ended, the First Lesson is read from the Old Testament; and then, a hymn having been meanwhile said or sung, the Second Lesson from the New.

It is one peculiar advantage connected with our Church service, that so large a quantity of Scripture should be thus brought before the people's minds in systematic course. Whatever be the ability, fidelity, or zeal of the clergyman in the pulpit, at least he ministers God's Word, and "diligently reads the same to the people assembled ;"\* and though he should not himself preach the Gospel, yet the Gospel is allowed freely to preach itself, and to set before the hearers, impartially and unreservedly, its own broad truths—even "all the counsel of God."

With regard to the selection of Lessons in the Church Calendar, it is so ordered that the Old Testament shall, with certain omissions, be read once, and the New Testament (with the exception of the book of The Revelation), three times in the year.

The Proper Lessons for Sundays and holidays are chosen with reference to the particular day and to the Christian season.

Some have objected to the selection of lessons from the Apocrypha; chapters from which are (during October and November) appointed to be read at the week-day services, though never upon Sundays.

By the "Apocrypha" are meant those books which are not properly to be included among the canonical or authoritative books of Holy Scripture. But in the Romish Church the books of the Apocrypha are held to be canonical; and you will sometimes hear the Romanist appealing to their testimony in favour of certain doctrines,

\* Office for "The Ordering of Deacons."

as of co-ordinate authority with what we and the Church of Rome receive in common as God's Word. And if you answer that you do not acknowledge the divine authority of these apocryphal books, the Romanist will perhaps reply, "Why then do you read them in your churches?"

It is well, therefore, for you to be "ready to give an answer to every man that asketh," both as to the reasons (1) why we do not acknowledge the apocryphal books as parts of Holy Scripture; and (2) why we thus read them publicly.

As for the first; the main and quite sufficient reason is, that they were never received by the Jews into the Sacred Canon.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, gives a list of the books which the Jews recognised as canonical; and this list—with some small differences of title and arrangement—contains the books of our Old Testament, and *none others beside these*.\* This then was the collection of sacred books existing among the Jews when our Lord came upon earth; and recognised by them under certain established and familiar titles, as e. g. the "Scriptures,"—"the Sacred Writings,"—"the Oracles of God."† Now it was from this collection our Lord quoted; and He refers to the books contained in it, under the ordinary well-known titles. He says to His hearers, "Search the Scriptures." He asks them, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures?"

\* See Horne's *Introd.*, vol. i., App. i., and Chalmers' *Evidences of Christianity*, book iv. chap. i., on the Canon of Scripture.

† αἱ γραφαὶ—ἡ γραφή—τὰ γράμματα—τὰ λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ.

He says to the Sadducees, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures." He argues, "How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled?" He tells men that "the Scripture cannot be broken."\*

Our Lord recognises, in short, as Scripture that which the Jews received as Scripture; and His Apostles do the same. He stamped the Jewish Canon, therefore, with His sanction. To put the argument in the simplest way: suppose our Lord were now to visit earth, and preach among us as He did among the Jews; suppose He were to take this sacred volume—the Bible—into His hands; to quote from its authority, and talk about it in the same way in which we do—as "The Scriptures—the Bible—the Holy Book—the Word of God," &c.; we should naturally and rightly understand Him to be thereby giving His sanction to the volume, and sealing it with His own recommendation as an authoritative book of sacred truth. And, then, suppose He were to leave the world again; and men were afterwards to add to this volume other books not attested in any way,—that is, not proved by miracle or sign to be from God,—then one might fairly say to them, "Unless you show some valid reason why those later books should be added to the Canon, as containing a further divine revelation, we will adhere to that which has been stamped with our Lord's approval; and we will appeal to the collection which we know He has authenticated."

It was just so that our Lord gave His testimony to the

\* John, v. 39; Matt. xxi. 42; xxii. 29; xxvi. 54; John, x. 35.

Jewish Canon. His sanction includes the books as they then stood, and it excludes all others which have been added since, but not miraculously proved.\*

This also is worth observing, that, although our Lord and His Apostles censure the Jews for many faults, they never accuse them of altering or mutilating in any way the sacred books. Our Lord reproves them for making void the commandments of God by their tradition, and for their ignorance of Scripture, but never for adding to,

\* And those who gainsay the historical truth of the Pentateuch and doubt its authorship by Moses, will, for the perfect satisfaction of all who accept the New Testament as true, and our blessed Lord's witness as decisive, be met by passages such as these: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me," St. John, v. 46. "All things must be fulfilled which are written in the LAW OF MOSES," &c. St. Luke, xxiv. 44. Compare further St. John, iii. 14, and vi. 49, where our Lord asserts the fact which some are bold to deny, and bases *instruction* on it. See also St. John, vii. 19; viii. 4; St. Mark, vii. 9, 10; xii. 24-27; and St. Luke, xvii. 31. Dr. Colenso replies that our Lord speaks here as "Son of Man;" and that as when a child He "increased in wisdom," so here He speaks not with *Divine* knowledge, but as "any other devout Jew." He asks, "Is it to be supposed that He had granted to him as the Son of Man, *supernaturally*, full and accurate information on these points?" It *is* to be supposed; for it *is* written, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him," &c. St. John, iii. 24. Jesus as a man "increased in wisdom;" but after His Baptism, He entered upon the office of a Teacher, and in that character, He says of Himself, "I tell you THE TRUTH;" and "I have given unto them the words which THOU gavest me." And again He says (St. John, vii. 46), "And if I say the truth, WHY DO YE NOT BELIEVE ME?"

or taking from, the Scripture Canon; and when St. Paul says that to the Jews had been "committed the oracles of God,"\* he brings no charge against them of any unfaithfulness of this kind. So grave an error, had they been guilty of it, would not, we may feel certain, have been unrebuked; nor would it have been left by our Lord and his Apostles, uncorrected.

Is it not very remarkable that both Churches—that of the Old and that of the New dispensation—should have been alike preserved from a corruption of this sort?

The Jewish Church, though corrupted in many respects, yet kept the Canon of the Old Testament inviolate; a scrupulous regard as to the very letter of the sacred writings was strongly characteristic of the nation; in that very superstition, however, which they always manifested upon the point, we have additional security that those writings have been all faithfully transmitted to us.

The Christian Church, again, though it has erred in many things, has never added to, nor taken from, the books of the New Testament—the special treasure of which she was to be the "witness and the keeper."

This is a striking evidence of the restraining providence of God, and of the watchful care of Christ over the Church which He has purchased. Does it not also give us encouragement to hope that a day may come when that whole Church shall be enabled to shake off the vast superincumbent mass of human traditions which have overlaid the truth, but not destroyed it; and that then the truth

\* Romans, iii. 2.

itself, disencumbered of an oppressive weight, shall come forth whole, and vigorous, and free?

The disentanglement of truth from error,—though, under any difficulties, always possible to God,—yet may appear to us more hopeful from this fact, that universal Christendom does join already in recognising as authoritative the same unaltered record of the Gospel teaching. There is at least one testimony left, to which all Churches yield professed respect; it may be yet the standard to which all shall be contented to appeal.

But to return to the other question with regard to the Apocrypha.

II. Why, if not Scripture, are these books read in church? The answer is best given in the words of our Sixth Article :—"The other books (as Hierome saith) the church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine." They are not therefore read as Holy Scripture, but placed on the same footing as the uninspired Homilies, or as the Sermon; and even on the days when Apocryphal Lessons are appointed, there is always one chapter read from Holy Scripture, which is all that is commonly given in other Christian communities; so that, you see, the charge of disrespect to Scripture cannot, with any show of truth whatever, be alleged against our Church; on the contrary, there is no Church which sets the Word of God so constantly and prominently forward.

After each Lesson, we sing one of those ancient hymns which have been used for ages in the Christian Church

This gives variety and life to our worship; and the hymns said or sung have in their several places also a special meaning as connected with that branch of the service where they occur.

In the *Te Deum*,\* for example,—used at our Morning Service after the first Lesson—we declare that God's promises of old are brought to pass in the Incarnation and Atonement of the Saviour, to whom all the law and the prophets witness; and we confess our faith in one Jehovah—the God not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles—God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The canticle called "*Benedicite*"—called also the "*Song of the Three Children*"—is an ancient paraphrase of the 148th Psalm; it was used as a hymn in the later Jewish Church, and also by many of the early Christians. It was appointed in A. D. 1549, to be read in Lent instead of the *Te Deum*; but afterwards its use was left to the minister's discretion, and it is now not very often read.

After the Second Lesson at Morning Prayer, we either

\* In the *Sarum Breviary* it is called also "*The Canticle of Ambrose and Augustin*," from the old legend that, at the baptism of Augustin by Ambrose, it was composed alternately by both. But its author is, in fact, unknown; it is thought to have been composed in the Gallican Church, (See Palmer's *Origines Liturgicæ*, vol. i. p. 256.) The thoughts and words of it are largely due to Scripture; for examples, see "*Common Prayer with Scripture proofs*," published by the Prayer-Book and Homily Society. Observe that the first verse is strictly, "*we praise Thee as God; Te Deum laudamus.*" "*The noble army of martyrs, &c.*," is "*Te martyrorum candidatus laudat exercitus*;" "*white-robed*;" in expressive allusion to Rev. iii. 5, and vi. 11.



chant that joyous Psalm (the 100th) called "Jubilate Deo;" or the song called "Benedictus," taken from the Gospel of St. Luke. In the latter we thank God in the inspired words of Zacharias for the revelation given in the New Testament; and bless the God of Israel for the fulfilment of His promises in Christ.\*

The hymns of thanksgiving, which are appointed after the Lessons at the Evening Service, have been selected with the same general design and meaning. They are all meant to lead us to thank God for the inestimable gift of His revealed word, and all the blessings which a true knowledge of it brings; to bring us to receive that word "with pure affection;" to value it as David did, and "claim those testimonies as our heritage for ever; because they are the very joy of our heart."

In this part of our service, intermingling, as it does, the "showing forth of God's most worthy praise" with the "hearing of His most holy word," we seem peculiarly to be fulfilling the Apostle's precept which I read to you at the beginning of this lecture, "LET THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELL IN YOU RICHLY IN ALL WISDOM; TEACHING AND ADMONISHING ONE ANOTHER IN PSALMS, AND HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS, SINGING WITH GRACE IN YOUR HEARTS TO THE LORD."

\* "In one edition of Edward the Sixth's First Prayer-Book, the rubric directing its use 'throughout the whole year' describes it as a *Thanksgiving for the performance of God's promises*."—Procter, p. 226.



## LECTURE IV.

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MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER, CONTINUED.

THE CREEDS.

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MATTHEW, xxi. 22.

*“ And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”*

I RESUME the consideration of our Public Service at the part where we left off last day,—the Apostles’ Creed.

There seems a meaning, probably intended, in the position which this general confession of faith occupies in the service; namely, between the lessons and the supplications; it is repeated *after* the lessons,—to suggest, perhaps, that “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God;”\* and *before* the supplications,—in order, I suppose, to remind us again, that “he who cometh unto God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.†

\* Romans x. 17.

† Hebrews xi. 6.

Having professed the faith which we have gathered from the teaching of God's holy Word, we proceed next to call on Him in whom we have believed, and ask of Him all "those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul."

And I think, too, that joining together before prayer in this confession of one Lord, one faith, one God and Father of us all, we should the more feel drawn in sympathy together, as one "blessed company of faithful people;" we should feel stirred to pray *for* and *with* each other the more cordially, for having immediately before professed a common belief and hope, as fellow-heirs in the "communion of saints."

This is perhaps the best opportunity for making some general remarks on the Three Creeds—those three which have been handed down for ages in the universal Church. These are, as you remember :

I. That "*commonly called*" the Apostles' Creed. Being the earliest Creed, it was, naturally enough, called "The Apostles' Belief," because it asserted, in opposition to error, what the Apostles believed and taught.\* There is, indeed, a tradition that the Apostles wrote it as it stands; but this cannot be true; for the variety of forms existing in the different apostolic churches before the Nicene Council, shows that no one formula had been received.

II. The Nicene Creed; it is so termed from the First

\* The tradition that each of the Apostles contributed an article has really no authority. It rests entirely upon the unsupported statement of a writer in the fourth century.

General Council, which was held at Nice [Nicæa, in Bithynia] A. D. 325, for the purpose of opposing the Arian heresy as to the eternal existence and very Divinity of Christ; this Creed was confirmed at the Council of Constantinople (A. D. 381)—at which some further clauses were inserted, in opposition to the Macedonian heresy respecting the Holy Spirit.

III. The Athanasian Creed; this was composed in Gaul (most probably by either Hilary, Bishop of Arles, or Victricius, Bishop of Rouen), somewhere about the first quarter of the fifth century;\* it was called after Athanasius, who died about fifty years before, because it maintained some of the truths for which he had earnestly contended.†

Two of these Creeds are repeated by us every Sunday: the Apostles' Creed at Morning Prayer; and the Nicene Creed at the Communion Service; the third,—called

\* Dr. Waterland, in his *History of the Athanasian Creed*, infers that it could not have been later, partly from its not containing express refutations of the Eutychian heresy (A. D. 451), or of Nestorianism (A. D. 431).

† The rubric emphatically says, "*commonly called the Creed of Saint Athanasius.*" The "truthful simplicity" of a "Protestant" critic might therefore have kept him from saying that this Creed "comes before us, as at present designated, under a falsely assumed title, and with a palpable deception upon the face of it, quite inconsistent with that truthful simplicity which ought to characterize in all its parts the Ritual of a Protestant Establishment." "*Liturgical Purity our Rightful Inheritance,*" by John C. Fisher, M. A. p. 522. This is too plainly in the tone of an angry assailant, to whom "*furor arma ministrat.*"

after Athanasius—is appointed to be read occasionally instead of the Apostles' Creed.

They are all three, as regards composition and expression, human works; but ought to be “thoroughly received and believed” by us, on the ground stated in the Eighth Article of our Church—“for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.” Creeds\*—or confessions of some sort—have been found necessary in all ages of the Church, as tests of the uniformity of its members in their Christian belief, and as safeguards of their faith against false doctrines and heresies. Hence also a creed is called a “symbol” of the faith; that is, a *sign*—a watchword, or distinctive token, designed to set a difference between those who confess certain fundamental truths and those who dispute or deny them.†

It appears likely that the earliest and simplest Creed was taken from the formula of Baptism; and that some very brief confession of belief in God—the Father, Son,

\* So called from the first word of two of them, “Credo,” “I believe,” as the Lord's Prayer was called from its first words “Pater-noster;” and as we speak of the “Te Deum.”

† Q. “Why is this abridgment of the faith termed a symbol?” Answer. A symbol is, as much as to say, a sign, mark, privy token, or watchword, whereby the soldiers of the same camp are known from their enemies.”—Short Catechism of Edward VI.

Lord King (History of the Creed) suggests that the term symbol was borrowed from the religious services of the Heathens, who gave to those who were initiated into their mysteries certain signs or marks (*symbola*) whereby they knew one another, and were distinguished from the rest of the world.—See Browne's Exposition of the Articles, Art. VIII.

and Holy Ghost—was a sufficiently comprehensive acknowledgment on the part of those who had received instruction in the faith, and were candidates for admission into the Church. For such a confession implied, in those who made it at the first, a full belief in the whole Gospel revelation.

But gradually, as errors and heresies began to show themselves, and men arose, “speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them,” it became necessary to expand these earlier and simpler professions of belief—to guard one precious truth after another, according as it came to be misinterpreted or assailed.

Thus, even before the time when we discover the Apostles’ Creed exactly as we have it now, we find traces of several confessions of faith like it among the various eastern and western Churches ; \* and these creeds—or symbols—are of greater or less length and fulness, according to the circumstances of each Church, and the errors which it found occasion to oppose. And in still later times, as heresies were multiplied, it was thought necessary to define each disputed truth yet more plainly, in such a way as to condemn the false doctrines that were afloat respecting it, and to exclude those who held them from the Church.

This, then, being the manner in which creeds arose, we ought not to expect to find in them—and least of all in the earliest of them—“a summary of all those

\* Bingham, in his *Eccles. Antiq.*, gives these at length. See also Pearson on the Creed.

doctrines which a Christian ought to believe."\* For, take the Apostles' Creed, and you will see it does not answer this description.

That Creed does not say anything expressly, e. g. as to the Divinity of our blessed Lord—nor of his death as an *Atonement* for our sins. Accordingly the Socinians, who deny both these truths, may and do use the Apostolic Creed. But if a Socinian were to argue from the omission of any express statements regarding these doctrines, that they were not believed when the Creed was first used, you might show him from the nature and origin of creeds in general, that the argument lies, in truth, quite the other way; and that the real reason why those truths were not at first more definitely stated, is simply because no greater definiteness was necessary at that time—did not, in short, occur to those who used the Creed at first—because the doctrines of Christ's Godhead and Atonement were universally believed by all who admitted the other articles of the Creed. They were not then disputed amongst professing Christians.

The later creeds add fuller statements on these truths, because heresies of later growth made it expedient and requisite to do so.

But when we repeat the Apostles' Creed in our public worship, we use it, doubtless, in the same comprehensive meaning which it conveyed to those who used it long ago; that is, we take it as expressing—upon our part—

\* "A brief sum of necessary points of faith."—Bishop Pearson, Art. 1. A "plain and short summary of fundamental doctrines."—Wheatley.



all those Christian truths which it implies. We understand its statements in their full Christian sense, as they are expanded and interpreted by Scripture.\*

Thus, for example, though (as I have said) the Socinians are satisfied to use this Creed as well as we, yet when we bow the head while we affirm that we believe "in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord," we mark thereby that we mean more than the Socinian means in using the same words; by that symbolic action, expressive of our reverent belief in Jesus as our Lord and our God, we signify that we utter these words in their most comprehensive scriptural significance; that we own "Jesus," "born of the Virgin Mary," as our *Divine Saviour*, God's *only Son*—the very "*Christ*," anointed to be our Prophet and our Priest—our "Lord," and King.†

"He suffered under Pontius Pilate." This clause is

\* The Apostles' Creed, as inserted in the Catechism, serves rather as a *basis* of instruction than as a complete compendium of Christian truth; for, from the "articles of our belief" contained in it, except as enlarged in this way and explained from Scripture, we could not "learn to believe in God the Son *who hath redeemed us*," nor in "the Holy Ghost as the *sanctifier* of the elect people of God;" because these truths, though to us Christians implied in the Apostles' Creed, are not expressly stated in it.

† It is to be regretted that (from a fear of formalism) this old and significant usage should be given up in some congregations; for, as against Socinian and Arian errors, this reverential action tends to make the Apostles' Creed—what else it certainly is not—a full profession of our faith in Christ as our God and Saviour. It supplements or rather *emphasizes* the confession which that Creed contains.

We can hardly appeal, however, to the text often quoted from Phil. ii. 10, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow;"

inserted to mark the date. And so it happens that the weak and wicked man who "took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person"—is everywhere, and to all ages, inseparably associated with that deed of murder which, in the act of sanctioning, he vainly attempted to disavow.

There is one clause in this Creed which is not always rightly understood; that one in which we say that Jesus Christ "descended into hell."

"Hell" does not mean here that place of torment which "is appointed for the devil and his angels;" it means simply the "place of departed spirits."\*

The word "hell" is derived from an old Saxon word, "helan" to cover—to conceal,† and so it simply denotes "the *covered* or *unseen* place." We find a prophecy of David written in the 16th Psalm, verse 10, "Thou wilt

because the original (*ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ*) means not "at" but "in the name of Jesus;" i. e. that every prayer should be addressed to God in Jesus' Name. So St. John, xiv. 13, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, (*ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι μου*)."

Compare St. John, xv. 16; xvi. 23, 24, 26.

\* "And any Churches may omit the words, He descended into hell, or may instead of them use the words, He went into the place of departed spirits, which are words of the same meaning in the Creed."—Rubric in the American Prayer-Book before Apostles' Creed.

† Saxon, *helan*, to cover—to conceal. From the past participle of the same word comes "hole," a deep place; hence also the word "heal," i. e. to cover over (cause to cicatrize) a wound; from this we speak of the wound being made "whole," or "hole" according to the ancient spelling, which still appears in "hale." "The word 'hale'

not leave my soul in *hell*; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption;” and you remember that the Apostle Peter quotes this prediction, in the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles (verse 25); he there applies the prophecy to our Lord, and speaks of it as being fulfilled in his rising again,—soul and body—“ He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his *soul* was not left in *hell*, neither his *flesh* did see *corruption*.”

The Hebrew word used by the Psalmist (Sheol), and the Greek word of the Apostle (Hades), mean also “ a covered or unseen place,” thus corresponding closely with the English term.\*

Thus, you perceive, the statement of the Creed rests on the words of David, as interpreted by an inspired Apostle; and affirms with them that our Lord’s soul went after death into the unseen place,—or state of departed spirits.

The reason why that article was put into the Creed was this; there were some persons† who denied that our

is still used in parts of England in the sense ‘ to cover ;’ and ‘ hellier’ is an old word for a slater or tiler, i. e. one who *covers* an house with tiles or slates.”—See Webster’s English Dictionary, on Heal, Hell, Hele, Hellier, Hole, Whole.

\* SHEOL means strictly a subterraneous cave, from a Hebrew word signifying to hollow [fodit, cavavit, unde Sheol, orcus pr. cavum subterraneum, Gesenius’ Heb. Lex.].

Hades (Αἰδης, a priv. ἰδεν) denotes “invisible,” i. e. the unseen world. Comp. Psalms [Prayer-Book Version] xlix. 14; lv. 16; lxxxviii. 10 lxxxix. 47; where “hell” occurs in the same sense.

† The Apollinarian heretics.

Lord had a human soul like ours; but supposed that the Godhead in Him supplied the place of the rational soul: therefore this clause was added to express the belief that He was in all points like as we are—"perfect man, of a *reasonable soul* and human flesh subsisting."

There were other mistaken people\* who imagined that our Lord's was not a real body, and that He suffered only in appearance. To guard against this latter notion, it was declared of Jesus Christ that He was "crucified, dead, and buried;" while in order to show that He had also "a reasonable soul," it was affirmed that where the souls of the departed go, thither Christ's spirit "descended;" that whatever be the intermediate state of the dead between death and the resurrection, that was the state in which Christ rested for three days. These two examples are enough to show you the way in which creeds originated and were gradually expanded.

Of the Nicene Creed I need not speak particularly. Let me refer, however, to one or two points. 1. "Very God of very God;" this means, "true God of [from] true God." The word "very" is here an adjective, and not an adverb, as it is now commonly used. It signifies "true," "real." So Isaac asks,† "Art thou my *very* son, Esau?" And the passage in St. John, xv. 1, "I am the true vine," is translated by Wiclif, "I am the verri (very) vine."‡

2. Observe (what is often overlooked in reading) that

\* The Docetæ, or Phantomists. Their notion was taken up by the Mahometans.—Eden's Theol. Dict.

† Genesis, xxvii.

‡ Lat. "verus." Fr. "vrai;" "Vrai Dieu de vrai Dieu."—We

the article, "By whom all things were made," refers to the Son,\* not to the Father, of Whom it has been said already in the Creed. It is in fact the statement of St. John,† "All things were made by Him [the Word]; and without Him was not anything made that was made."

3. "And I believe in the Holy Ghost—the Lord—and Giver of life"—so we should read the clause, for it affirms two things: (1) the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, in opposition to the Arians; and to the Macedonians, who spoke of Him as only a ministering spirit; and (2) that He is "the Giver of life."‡ But by the minister sometimes, and by the people almost always, this passage is read incorrectly.

should read it thus, "God of God; Light of Light; very God, of very God begotten, not made." Gr. *εκ*—Lat. *de*.

\* By suspending the tone of the voice in reading the clause, we may make it plain that this statement refers to the same person as those that precede and follow.

† St. John, i. 3.

‡ "Et in Spiritum S. Dominum, et Vivificantem;" *Τό Κθριον και το ζωοποιον*. Note also these: (1) He *rose* again from the dead," not "He rose *again*," as if He arose twice. (2) "And He shall come again—WITH GLORY—to judge both the quick and the dead."

The addition *Filioque* ("and from the Son") was the unfortunate occasion of the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches, when, in A. D. 1053, Leo IX. excommunicated the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Greek Churches. The addition seems to have been first made about 200 years after the Council of Nice. It is rather to be regretted that our Reformers should have omitted the opportunity of making a step towards reconciliation with the Eastern Churches by the removal of a clause, which, though supported by St. John xvi. 7, seems non-essential as a dogmatic statement.

III. The Athanasian Creed, being of later date than the other two, is, on the face of it, a more formal defence of the Christian faith. It is both more elaborate in its statements and more controversial in its tone.

Some people seem, however, to misconceive the object of this Creed.

They think it was intended as an *explanation* of the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation. But this it certainly was not; it only affirms what Holy Scripture teaches upon these mysterious subjects, and goes no farther than the Scriptures warrant. It does not undertake to explain what is to finite minds inexplicable; but, on the contrary, its purpose is to set aside certain attempts at explanation which were made by others; it puts together and earnestly asserts the statements of revelation upon these points, defending them from the misstatements and corruptions of false teachers, and from the pretended solutions of the would-be wise.

It would be very tedious and not very profitable to describe to you minutely what the several heresies and errors were, which this Creed was intended to oppose and guard against. Many of them were very complicated and subtle. They all arose principally from one cause; that is, from men's impatience of receiving, even on God's proved word, truths which they could not fully comprehend; a like spirit of unbelief leading some persons to reject whatever they could not understand, and others to devise some explanation of whatever they did believe. For the same want of faith will commonly betray itself in these two ways; the results are different, but spring

from the same source. It is, undoubtedly, alike a want of faith—either to set aside God's revelations because we do not comprehend the *whole* of what He has revealed ; or, on the other hand, to set about contriving explanations and inventing reasons of our own, additional to those which God has given. Unbelief in one man makes him reject the revelation ; the selfsame spirit in another makes him try to force it within the limits of his own philosophy, and be dissatisfied until he square it after the dimensions of his own finite understanding. \*

Remember, then, the Athanasian Creed is not, as some suppose, an *explanation* of the doctrine of the Trinity and of the Incarnation, but a reiteration of what Scripture says about these facts—set forward so as to refute certain unscriptural misrepresentations and perversions of them.

It was in this way that the Creed originated, and with this view that it was framed. It is true, as many persons have objected, that this Creed contains learned phrases and hard words, which those who are unacquainted with ecclesiastical history, and know neither the names nor character of the refuted heresies, find it difficult or nearly impossible to comprehend. No doubt, this is the case ; but if, on this admission, it is further asked, “ Why then does the Church deliver to plain people a document which contains phrases and expressions that the learned only can understand ? ”—the simplest answer, as it appears to me, is this,—The Athanasian Creed *was not intended for plain people* ; at least, not further than this, that if they

\* The opposite but concentric errors of “ Dogmatism ” and “ Rationalism ” pointed out in “ Mansel's Bampton Lectures.”

or any other professing Christian, were in danger of being led astray by heretical doctrines, they might see those doctrines here exposed and condemned, and have the advantage of finding the established truths of Scripture set forward here—in a direct, short way—in opposition to such errors. If they understood the language in which the errors were conveyed, they might equally well understand the language in which they were condemned. And if they knew and understood nothing of the errors, it was not of much practical consequence that they were unable entirely to comprehend the refutation of them either.

We must remember that the teachers who inculcated the heresies alluded to, expressed them for the most part in what may be called scholastic terms, and an obscure sort of philosophical, or would-be philosophical phraseology; and of course, in referring to and denouncing those heresies, it was necessary to take up the language of the teachers of them, and to employ the terms they used. This was essential for the purpose of making the Creed practically useful; it being intended as a sort of *proclamation to all whom it concerned*.

If, then, I find a plain unlearned Christian speaking as if he felt it rather a burden to hear read in church, and be expected to unite in a Creed which he very imperfectly comprehends, I should explain to him, of course, the meaning of the terms that puzzle him, as far as the circumstances might require or allow. At the same time, however, I would say, "Recollect that this Creed was drawn up with the design of refuting very subtle heresies, and of protecting the Church against their in-



roads. If you, for your part, are of those who resolutely and on the evidence of Scripture hold to the plain truths which you find there revealed upon these subjects, that is sufficient. If you believe in one true and living God, even the Father, who made you and all the world—the Son, who became man, and died to redeem you and all mankind—the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth you and all God's chosen people—that is the substance of the Creed—that is the Catholic faith here defended and maintained—that is enough for you. 'Continue thou in the things which thou hast known and learned.' No doubt, parts of this Creed that are directed against some particular heresies of which you never heard and are in little danger, may seem about as little directly profitable to you, as a *sermon* would be which was addressed against the same. And if this would be the case with regard to such a discourse, it is but natural that you should feel something of the same sort respecting the Creed. Yet would you not think it somewhat selfish to object, if, for the sake of others, a sermon or a course of sermons should be made necessary by the existence or spread of subtle errors in the Church, even although you yourself needed no satisfaction and no further information than you already had on the disputed doctrines? In the same way, it is but fair to recollect that the Creed is retained, not so much for the benefit of every separate individual, or each particular congregation, as for a safeguard to the Church generally, and as a kind of standing protest against certain errors which have in former times assailed the Christian faith, and may assail

it again. Not a few, indeed, of the very heresies referred to in this Creed exist at the present day—some under other names, and somewhat altered; others pretty nearly the same as when they were detected and refuted long ago. And there is some advantage now in being able, when these false doctrines are propounded, to point the teachers of them to this old document, which was adopted by the Christian Church many centuries since, and say to them, “See! after all, this doctrine which you bring to our ears is not original or novel; it was put forward long ago, and long ago condemned as being contrary to Scripture; you are but trying to revive the form of a dead heresy; it did not live formerly; it could not hold its ground against the living truth of God; you cannot give it vitality now; let it remain uprooted; it is not of God’s planting.”

Again, viewing the Creed as an historical record or traditionary relic, it serves to show us that in our struggles for the pure faith of the Gospel (and those struggles are not over yet), we do not stand alone; it reminds us that we are but encountering—perhaps in the same forms, perhaps in others slightly or outwardly differing—such opposition as Christianity has surmounted before, and shall be able to live down again; and that amidst all the shifting shapes of human error, **THE TRUTH**—that truth which we and our forefathers have alike gathered from God’s word—is one and the same, unchangeable as He on whose sure word it rests.

## LECTURE V.

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MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER, CONTINUED.

THE ATHANASIAN CREED, CONTINUED.

THE LITANY.

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ROMANS, X. 14.

*“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?”*

I RESUME, in this Lecture, the consideration of the Athanasian Creed.

We have seen already that this Confession, or Defence of the Catholic Faith, though not required for each individual Christian, and not exactly suited to his case, has its uses still with regard to the Church generally. It is a safeguard against the revival, whether in similar or different forms, of those heresies which the Christian Church many centuries ago denounced—and the Church universal has agreed ever since in condemning—as being contrary to Holy Scripture. It serves also to link each succeeding age, in its struggles for the truth, with the ages before it; thus giving to each Church additional encouragement in contending earnestly “for the faith once

delivered to the saints." These were probably among the considerations which persuaded our Reformers to retain this Creed as a part of the public service, in spite of its defects in point of clearness and simplicity, and consequent unsuitability in some respects for such a purpose.

Their principal reason, however, for doing so seems to have been this:—The Athanasian Creed had been used in this way in the Church for many centuries, as also the other Creeds had been.\* If therefore those Creeds, or any one of them, had been omitted from the public service at the Reformation, people would have been sure to charge the Reformers with denying the *doctrine* contained in them. They would have accused them of altering the ancient faith of the Church, and introducing a new religion. This was the favourite taunt—as common then as it is now—"Where was your religion before Luther?" Our Reformers could reply that it was in the *Bible*; and that should have been answer enough; but they wished also to show, beyond a cavil, that theirs was the religion of the Church universal—the same Catholic [i. e. universal] faith which had been handed down from the beginning; accordingly, while they retained the same three Creeds in which the Church had for ages confessed and defended her faith, they directed that, in open testimony of this, those Creeds should con-

\* In the Sarum Breviary the Athanasian Creed was appointed to be sung at the daily service called "Prime;" in the Roman Breviary on every Sunday. In our Church it is ordered to be read on thirteen days in the year, at intervals of about a month.

tinne, as hitherto, to be recited publicly at times of divine worship.\*

There is no occasion to go through all the clauses of the Creed before us; let me, however, call your attention to one passage of it which is often misunderstood even by educated people, viz:—"The Father *incomprehensible*, the Son *incomprehensible*, the Holy Ghost *incomprehensible*." The word *incomprehensible* means, commonly, "above our understanding"—"inconceivable;" but in this place it has not that signification; it means "not comprehended within limits." The original Latin word is "*immensus*," immense, that is to say, "immeasurable,"—"infinite."†

With regard to the condemnatory clauses of the Creed, I cannot but admit that passages of this sort, requiring explanation, and, in spite of repeated explanations, liable to be still misunderstood, might have been better omitted altogether, or put in some other way; at the same time it may be urged, upon the other hand, that those passages, rightly and fairly interpreted, are not open to the objections which some people imagine. Whether, indeed, this

\* Some persons think that, under present circumstances, it would be well if the Athanasian Creed were placed among the Articles rather than retained as a part of the public service—for which it does appear too controversial and obscure—but we are bound in candour to take into account all the circumstances which may have influenced our Reformers in their decision.

† "*Immensus Pater, immensus Filius, immensus Spiritus Sanctus*." The same word is translated "infinite" in Article 1.; and in the *Te Deum*, "The Father, of an infinite majesty," is "*immensa majestatis*."

be so or not, it does appear that those condemnatory clauses are not, properly speaking, part of the Creed itself, as a confession of faith, but an opinion of the framers of it. Those denunciatory passages are not statements of doctrine, like the others, but affirmations *about* certain doctrines, viz. as to the importance and absolute necessity of believing them; so that at least it would not seem quite fair in us to accuse every one of disbelieving the Athanasian Creed who might hesitate to join the framers of it in those strong condemnations which are independent of the Creed itself.\* Thus, for example, the last sentence, "This is the Catholic faith; which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." Here (may it not be fairly said?) are two quite distinct and separable assertions: the one, that what had gone before is, as regards the substance of it "the Catholic faith;" the other, that "except a man believe this faithfully, he cannot be saved." The first is a formal statement of what constitutes the Catholic faith; the second, an assertion as to the consequences of disbelieving it. This distinction is at least worth consideration; at the same time, I cannot but repeat that the opinion expressed in these denunciatory clauses is one which, rightly understood, it would not be very easy, on scriptural grounds, to object to or disprove. For, consider what is affirmed in those passages, and the circumstances

\* Archbishop Magee suggested that these clauses, "not being parts of the Creed so much as denunciations, might perhaps (to mark the distinction of the parts) be printed in a different type from the rest."

under which they were written. This Creed was designed for a safeguard to professing Christians under circumstances of great peril to their faith; they were in imminent danger of being led away by men who had privily brought into the Church what St. Peter calls "damnable heresies;" they were in danger of being "spoiled, through philosophy and vain deceit," of that treasure of sound faith which God had committed to their trust; and the framers of the Creed wished to sound a timely note of alarm; to warn men in the strongest, plainest way of the risk they would incur in departing from the truth they had received, and following human prejudices, guesses, and inventions, rather than the revelation which had been given to them by God. They wrote, be it observed, for professed members of the Christian Church, and with a view to keep them "steadfast in the faith" they had received already. "Who-soever will be—that is to say, *wishes* (desires) to be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold, (i. e. hold fast, *retain*), the Catholic faith; which faith except every one do keep" (i. e. *preserve*) "whole and undefiled" (as God has given it into his keeping), "without doubt he shall perish everlastingly."\* What these words

\* *Quicumque vult salvus esse ante omnia opus est ut teneat catholicam fidem; quam nisi quisque integram inviolatamque servaverit, absque dubio in æternum peribit.* The passage, "He therefore that will be saved *must* thus think of the Trinity," is somewhat stronger than the Latin original warrants; it is "qui vult ergo salvus esse, ita de Trinitate *sentiat*" — he who *wishes* to be saved *let him thus think* of the Trinity. It is so given in the Scotch Prayer-Book.

really imply is this :—" Every professing Christian has received the faith—a sacred deposit and treasure from the hands of God ; let him take care that he *preserve* it—as he has received it—whole and undefiled ; let him remember that if he mutilate, or wilfully corrupt, or cast away the truth which God has committed to his trust and use, he does so at his great peril."

And surely the warning is a sound one. Men are too apt to speak in a loose sort of way, as if "belief or disbelief of doctrines" did not greatly matter. But is not this as much as to say that, although God has given us a revelation, it does not matter what liberties we take with it ? that, though He has thought fit to make known such and such truths, we may indifferently accept or discard them just as we please ? Men strangely forget that there is this great difference between religious truths and those of every other sort, as, for example, scientific truths—that in the case of the former we are without exception *bound* to examine,—bound each one to learn,—and bound also to believe whatever God has plainly delivered to us as truth. We are not in this matter free to choose ; if we reject the manifest broad truths of God's own written word, for fancies or perversions of our own, we do so at our serious peril—and this, like every other sin, shall be to our cost.

Now, if we learn anything at all from Scripture, we surely learn this : to believe in God the Father, who made us—the Son, who came from Heaven to redeem us—the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in us and sanctifieth us—and



"yet not three Gods, but one God." This is the Catholic faith; this is the summary of Gospel revelation; this is the truth to which assent is claimed in the Creed upon the warrant of Holy Scripture.\* You may not see the meaning of all the fortifications which are erected round about these truths in the more controversial, detailed statements of the Creed; you may not see the need of those defences which are thrown up before the Christian faith, according as danger from one quarter or another threatened it; but you can see and recognise the faith itself which is defended; and *that* you are not free to disbelieve or doubt. You may not understand all the expressions and allusions of the Creed; it is not necessary that you should be able to do this; but the broad Catholic faith which is maintained in it you are bound to believe upon God's word; and surely you would at least hardly venture to say less than the framers of the Creed say as to the absolute importance of receiving ALL that God has chosen to reveal upon these subjects; nor can you venture to deny the peril of deliberately rejecting that revelation or any part of it.

We have no right to soften down or to explain away such strong clear passages as these, which, after all, the Creed, in its damnable clauses, does but repeat in other words:—

\* The Commissioners appointed in 1689 to review the Liturgy agreed that a rubric should be made, declaring that "the condemning clauses were not to be restrained to each particular article, but were intended against those that deny the substance of the Christian religion in general."

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”\*

“Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist.”†

“Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”‡

“There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”§

“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.”||

God has given us a revelation; and He holds us answerable to Himself, so far as He judges our means and opportunities to reach, for what we believe as well as what we do.

It is our duty and our wisdom to have His word so “hidden in our hearts,” that we may not “sin against him,” either by false belief or by unrighteous practices. Ignorance, if that ignorance be perverse or wilful, is not an excuse in the one case any more than in the other, but of itself implies a moral culpability.

Let us take care, however, that in speculative inquiry

\* Mark, xvi. 16. † 1 John, iv. 3. ‡ 1 John, v. 5.

§ 2 Peter, ii. 1. The words above would be more closely rendered, “denying as their Master Him who bought them” (Τὸν ἀγοράσαντα αὐτοὺς δεσπότην ἀρνούμενοι).

|| 2 Peter, iii. 17.

or controversial zeal, we do not lose sight of the true character and purpose of the great truths which we acknowledge in this Creed. Let us remember that they are revealed just in that measure and degree in which they practically and directly concern ourselves; that the end for which they are disclosed is not to make us wiser, but *better* men and women—even to make us “wise unto salvation.” Our Saviour’s prayer was, “Sanctify them through thy truth.” Yes, though we had all knowledge, and understood all mysteries, these would not avail us, except we, who make a true confession with our lips, “believe with our hearts unto righteousness.”\* An orthodox Creed will prove, not our safety but our condemnation, except we live as those who do indeed believe they have a loving Father—a present, all-sufficient Saviour—a living, quickening Sanctifier; and, brethren, be assured that “he who will be saved, must *thus*”—thus faithfully, devotionally, practically—“think of the Trinity.”

Immediately after the Creed is ended, it is the habit in many places for the congregation to kneel down at once without a pause; but you should notice that before kneeling there is a mutual salutation to be first pronounced by minister and people; before praying, each asks for the other the “spirit of grace and supplication;” and it is not a mere nicety of rubrical observance, but a seemly regard to a significant custom, that these words of mutual good-will and intercession should be pronounced

\* Romans, x. 10.

in the way that is directed—as words that have a real and a very solemn meaning.\*

“The Lord be with you,” the minister asks for the people in the words of Boaz;† “And with thy spirit,” they reply, after the Apostle’s language.‡ They and he need alike that presence; and the more heartily we ask it for each other, the more real and united shall be the response on both sides to that call which follows, “*Let us pray.*”

Upon these words we kneel, and join first in those three brief invocations called, in old times, “the lesser Litany.”§ Then we unite in the Lord’s Prayer, which seems to be repeated here as a sort of preface to the third and concluding stage of the service, consisting of

\* “This interchange between clergy and people of mutual prayer or desire for each other’s good success in the spiritual work of the sanctuary is entirely in the spirit, and to the purpose, of the old interchange of the “Confiteor” and “Misereatur.” It is still to us, what that formula was designed to be, a touching recognition of the equal need, under difference of position, of clergy and people; and well illustrates the mutually sustaining character of their common worship.”—Principles of Divine Service, Rev. P. Freeman, vol. i., p. 363.

† Ruth, ii. 4.

‡ 2 Tim. iv. 22; Gal. vi. 18.

§ These three invocations (which are not “vain repetitions,” but, like the opening invocations in the Litany, addressed to the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity) are the Kyrie Eleison—“Lord, have mercy”—of the ancient Breviaries. In the old Offices, petitions pronounced alternately by the minister and congregation were called “Preces;” those uttered, as the Collects, by the minister alone, “Orationes.” The transition from the one to the other was marked by the words “Oremus,”—“Let us pray.”

"INTERCESSION." Next come those petitionary versicles which are repeated alternately by priest and people. These are, for the most part, taken from the Psalms, and are a kind of general summary of the succeeding collects and prayers, which refer to the same topics. They ask, as the "Three Collects" do, salvation, peace, grace; and the intermediate three petitions correspond to the Prayers for the Queen, the clergy, and for all conditions of men. It has been conjectured indeed that the filling in, at the later revision, of the scheme of our Collects and Prayers, was suggested by the *headings* which these petitions furnish.\*

The clauses, "Give peace in our time, O Lord;" "Because there is none other that fighteth for us but only Thou, O God," have suggested to some a difficulty. As has been said, "The connexion between this petition and its response is not very obvious at first sight: the former evidently supposes a state of war (and war seldom ceased in the rude times in which these versicles were framed); while the latter implies that God alone can give the victory, which will secure peace as its result."† "Give peace in our time," &c. The emphatic word here is "peace." That is what we, as Christians, should desire; and we ask God to aid our cause, that we may have it. It is He who "breaketh the bow and knappeth the spear in sunder," who also "maketh wars to cease in all the earth." It is He who maketh even our enemies to be at peace with us;" and therefore we commit our cause

\* Principles of Divine Service, vol. i., p. 366.

† Procter, p. 236.

to Him who hath "the government upon his shoulder," for He is also the "Prince of Peace."

The "Collects" which follow are so named because they are a "collection" of prayers taken out of Holy Scripture: "important prayers collected in few words;" or more probably, perhaps, because they "collect" as into a focus the teaching of the Epistle and Gospel, gathering them up into a single petition.\* The word at first denoted particularly the prayer associated with the Epistle and Gospel which were used as the Eucharistic Lessons, i. e. in connexion with the Communion celebration of each week. The "Collect" embodied their teaching, and was a memorial of it; giving the key-note for the Christian's prayer and meditation throughout the week. Later, however, the word is used more generally, as meaning any "brief petition." The Collects of this service consist of that appointed "For the Day,"† and of two other

\* Trench's Study of Words, p. 213. Another suggestion is, from *Collecta*, the name for the ordinary Office as distinguished from the Communion; the Collect, taken from the Communion, being specially designed to impart something of a Eucharistic character to the ordinary Office.

† The American Prayer-Book omits this Collect here "when the Communion Service is read." Qu. When a Saint's-day falls on a Sunday—or in Advent or Lent season—is a clergyman bound to read *both* collects in this place as well as again at the Communion Service? The rubric here says, "Then shall follow *three* collects." There are indeed three "Collects for the Day" on Good-Friday. In the edition, however, of 1549, the first only was to be read at Matins; and it appoints, by a rubric, that "*after the Collects at the Communion [for the Day, and for the King or Queen] shall be said these two Collects following.*"—See Keeling's *Liturgiæ Britannicæ*, p. 103.

short forms, which vary in the Offices for Morning and Evening Prayer. And this variety has, I believe, a meaning. The second collect at each service is a prayer "for peace;"\* the subject of petition is the same, but the words are different, and suited to the respective seasons. "We ask for outward peace in the morning, to secure us against the troubles of the world; and inward peace in the evening, to comfort and quiet our minds when we are to take our rest. In the second of each pair of collects (i. e. the 'Third Collect' in each service), we ask in the morning, grace and guidance to direct us in our duty; and in the evening, light and aid when we are passive or unconscious. The metaphor of light, according to Scripture usage, will include the two ideas of knowledge and comfort. We therefore pray that our understanding may be enlightened to perceive the sleepless providence of God, and our hearts cheered with the assurance of His love."†

The SECOND COLLECTS for Morning and Evening Prayer‡ owe their origin to the prayers called "Memorials," which were connected with some special Christian doc-

\* Compare on the words "in knowledge of whom standeth [consisteth] our eternal life," our Lord's saying (John, xvii. 3), "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." The original form has it, "*quem nosse vivere, cui servire regnare est*;" "whom to know is to live; whom to serve is to reign." I have found many persons who supposed that the passage meant—"Who knowest if we shall have eternal life or not,"—which would of course be true, but is not here intended.

† Procter, p. 246.

‡ See Principles of Divine Service, vol. i., pp. 222, 228.

trine, such as the Incarnation, Crucifixion, Descent of the Holy Spirit, &c., and intended to keep it in mind.

These two Collects for "Peace" were associated anciently as memorials, with a "Gospel," taken from St. John, xx. 19-24—"My Peace I give unto you," &c.; and this being our Lord's parting bequest to His Church, they were early introduced as "fixed memorials" into the Daily Offices.

The THIRD COLLECTS at Morning and Evening Prayer are due to the Eastern Church. The former occurs in the "Prime" office of St. Basil; the latter in the Eastern "compline," or last office of the day. The originals are "Hymn-like prayers," corresponding in design to the Western "Collects," and are based on the Psalms used in each office. Thus the former is a "cento" of Psalms xc., xci., and li.; and the latter also is founded on the same and some other Psalms. The Eastern original is—"Lighten my eyes, O Christ my God, that I sleep not in death," &c.

With respect to the remaining part of the Order for Morning and Evening Prayer, I need not point out to you how exactly it is framed after the precept of the Apostle Paul in his first Epistle to Timothy,\*—"I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplications and prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."†

\* 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

† The PRAYER FOR ALL CONDITIONS OF MEN was probably composed by Bishop Gunning. It was originally longer, and brought into one prayer, the petition for the king, royal family, clergy, &c., which



And I would have you to observe, with reference to these prayers for the Queen, for the Royal Family, the Clergy and people, and for all conditions of men, that in every case it is no less than the gift of the Holy Spirit itself which is desired on behalf of those for whom we pray : " Replenish her with the grace of thy Holy Spirit ;" " Endue them with thy Holy Spirit ;" " the healthful Spirit of thy grace ;" and for the Catholic Church, " that it may be so guided and governed by thy Holy Spirit," &c.

In the " Prayer for the clergy and people,"\* I need

are scattered through several collects. At the last review these were continued as separate intercessions, and the corresponding clauses were thrown out of this general prayer. But the word "*finally*," which had previously stood as the summing up of a long series of petitions, was retained through an oversight, and this accounts for its occurrence in the middle of so short a form. See Rev. F. Procter, p. 262. Wheatley, on the authority of Dr. Biase, mentions that Bishop Gunning himself, who was Master of St. John's College, Cambridge, never allowed this prayer to be read in the afternoon, "because the Litany was never read then, the place of which it was supposed to supply." The GENERAL THANKSGIVING, which Wheatley attributes to Bishop Sanderson, was (as Cardwell, Hist. of Conf., p. 372, shows, with greater probability) composed by Reynolds, Bishop of Norwich. It is for "general mercies," as opposed to "particular." There is no rubric to warrant the custom which some clergymen encourage, of the people repeating it aloud along with the minister. The use of this form seems also optional, there being no rubric prefixed to it. The occasional Thanksgivings, as well as the "occasional prayers," are almost exclusively English compositions.

\* "Who only workest great marvels," has been changed in the American Prayer-Book to "from whom cometh every good and perfect gift."

only direct your attention to one word, "Give thy grace to all bishops and CURATES. "CURATE" (derived from *curare*, to take charge) signifies here—as in the prayer for the Church militant, and in the office for the ordination of Deacons,—every clergyman, whether rector, vicar, or other minister, who has the *cure* [charge] of souls committed to him. Every incumbent of a parish is the *curate* of it, and the proper ecclesiastical designation for one who aids him in this charge is "curate-assistant."

The words of St. Paul [1 Tim. ii. 1, 2,] seem also the model of our LITANY, a form which, in its main features, is gathered from very ancient sources.

The Litany, or "supplication," as the word denotes, was originally put forth in a separate book in the time of Henry VIII., and meant to be a distinct office. But under Edward VI. and Elizabeth it was ordered to be said immediately before the Communion Office; and seems to have been regarded as an intercessory and penitential introduction to the Communion. As a form, simply but specially, *penitential*, it was appointed also for Wednesdays and Fridays.\*

\* The fifteenth Canon, as well as the Injunction of 1559, directs that "upon Wednesdays and Fridays, weekly . . . the minister . . . shall resort to the church or chapel, and, warning being given to the people by tolling of a bell, shall say the Litany prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer. Whereunto we wish every householder dwelling within half a mile of the church, to come, or send one at least of his household, fit to join with the minister in prayer." On the question of the union of the three Offices for Morning Prayer, Litany, and Communion, see Note C appended to this Lecture.

I shall here only notice a few of the passages and phrases in the Litany, that are sometimes misunderstood.

1. In the first invocation, observe the punctuation, "O GOD THE FATHER, OF HEAVEN;" not, as it is frequently read, "Father of heaven."\*

2. In the third of the "Deprecations" (or prayers for deliverance from certain evils) the expression "DEADLY SIN" occurs. This means (not mortal, as opposed to venial, but) presumptuous, deliberate sins. Against such we pray, with David, as well as against "the *deceits* of the world, the flesh, and the devil."†

3. "FROM SUDDEN DEATH." This seems to have referred particularly, as the context intimates, to a *violent* death. The suddenness, however, against which a Christian prays—the only suddenness which any one need greatly fear—is that which may find him in any respect unprepared. It is in this sense that we use the prayer; though this would, perhaps, have been clearer to every one, if the alteration suggested at the last review had

\* "Pater de cœlis, Deus." "Father from heaven—God;" i. e. who art in heaven—Heavenly. The words, "have mercy upon us miserable sinners" are not to be read as if an invocation of sinners, but with a slight emphasis on "us," to which "miserable sinners" is in apposition.

† The bishops at the Savoy Conference said they preferred this expression to "heinous" or "grievous sin" (which Baxter wished to substitute), because the Scripture say, "the wages of sin is *death*."—See Cardwell, chap. vii. There may be a further and special reference to the peculiarly *deadening* character of the class of sins referred to.

been adopted:—"from dying suddenly and unprepared, good Lord, deliver us."\*

4. "IN ALL TIME OF OUR WEALTH."—Wealth here does not mean "riches," but "weal" or prosperity, opposed to "tribulation."† So in the prayer for the Queen we ask, "Grant her in health and wealth [prosperity] long to live." Thus also we find in 1 Cor. x. 24, "Let no man seek his own but every man another's *wealth*, [welfare];" and in Psalm lxi. 23, "Let the things which should have been for their wealth be unto them an occasion of falling;" where in the Bible version we have "welfare."

5. "That it may please Thee to give us an heart to love and DREAD THEE." To *dread* here means to fear with reverence; not with that uneasy alarm that is connected with the common meaning of the word.‡ In the prayer for the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland we have the phrase, "our most dread Sovereign;" i. e. most venerable. And Jacob says, on awakening after the vision of the ladder, "How dreadful (i. e. *awful*) is this place!"§

6. "And—FINALLY to beat down Satan under our

\* And this would have agreed with the old words of the Sarum Breviary, "a subitaneâ et improvisâ morte,—from sudden and unprovided death."

† So we have "Commonweal" and "Commonwealth." See a most useful Glossary of Obsolete Words and Phrases in the English Bible, Apocrypha, and Book of Common Prayer, by the Rev. John A. Booker, A. M., published by Messrs. Hodges, Smith, and Co., Dublin.

‡ The American Prayer-Book has it, "to love and fear thee."

§ Gen. xxviii. 17.

feet." "Finally" does not mean here "in fine," or "in conclusion," but "in the end and as the issue of our struggle." It should not therefore be read "and, finally, to beat down," &c.

7. "KINDLY FRUITS OF THE EARTH."—Kindly here means, "natural,"—the fruits of the earth "after their *kind*,"—according to the expression which we find in the first chapter of Genesis.\*

8. I have heard it asked, with reference to the petition, "that it may please Thee to forgive us all our sins, NEGLIGENCES, AND IGNORANCES,"—is not this order the opposite of what one would expect, being a sort of *anticlimax*, beginning with, instead of rising to, the greatest? But is it not here as if the sinner felt himself confessing under the searching eye of God—that look penetrating nearer and nearer to the very secrets of the soul? First, then, the sinner sees and owns the "*sins*" committed—those of which "his own heart condemns him;" but God sees closer yet, and there are sins of omission—"negligences," too—to be bewailed; and closer, more clearly still, for our own hearts are "deceitful," and it is hard to know our real selves; but "God is greater than our hearts; He knoweth all things;" therefore there is need

\* Instances of this use of the word occur in the older writers. Dean Trench (*English Past and Present*) quotes from Sir Thomas More's *Life of Richard the Third*, where he says that Richard calculated by murdering his two nephews to make himself a "kindly king," i. e. *by kind*, or natural descent. The like use appears in the popular expression, "He takes to it," or (of a person), "He takes to him, kindly," i. e. naturally—as if of kin or kind.

to pray that faults incurred through ignorance of our duty—our “*ignorances*”—may be pardoned too. God sees the whole; His clearer, holier glance discovers guilt even where we do not; after confessing all that we know, or our dull consciences reproach us with, we have still reason to pray with David, “Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults.” Thus then, you see, that having regard to Him who trieth not the life only, but also the “reins and heart,” the order in the Litany is exactly that which is most natural and fitting, “*sins, negligences, and ignorances.*”\*

9. The double invocation, “O Lamb of God who TAKEST AWAY THE SINS of the world,

*Grant us thy peace;*

\* In the prayer beginning, “O God, merciful Father, that despisest not,” &c. there is a passage, the right reading of which is disputed, viz., “those evils which the craft and subtilty of the Devil or man worketh against us.” The question is, whether man is to be read as a second nominative, or as a genitive depending on “*craft*,” &c. The latter would be correct, if the prayer be taken immediately (as Palmer thinks) from Hermann’s Ritual, which has “quod contra nos diabolicæ ac humanæ fraudes moliantur.” But the Sarum Missal has “quicquid contra nos diabolicæ fraudes atque humanæ moliantur adversitates.”—See Palmer’s Orig. Lit., I. 328.

The prayer, “We humbly beseech Thee, O Father,” &c., is partly eleven hundred years old, being taken from the Sacramentary of Gregory; but it had become corrupted by intreaties for the intercession of saints. These our Reformers left out; and (as Bishop Mant notes) “inserted for complete security a new clause, ‘Grant that in all our troubles, &c., we may put our *whole* trust and confidence in Thy mercy.’”

"O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the  
WORLD,

*"Have mercy upon us;"*

has, or appears to me to have, a significance not perhaps always given to it in reading and responding. In the first address, the special thought of Christ is as of Him who "taketh away sin," and therefore we ask Him to "grant us peace." But as we press our suit, the feeling of our entire unworthiness arrests us, as it were, in our approach to the throne of grace. We pause; but we gather fresh hope and "full assurance of faith," from the fact that the love to which we are appealing is *universal*; that the propitiation in which we trust is "for the whole world;" and therefore—without any other plea—without any personal assurance or expectation of it—we cast ourselves upon that world-wide mercy—that love which is for all—

"O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the  
*World,*

*"Have mercy upon us."*

There is no repetition here (as some have inconsiderately objected); but a distinctness of meaning in each of the two invocations. In the Hymn of Thanksgiving at the end of the Communion office, beginning, "Glory be to God on high," there is the same reiteration, with, I think a like twofold and distinct significance in each appeal. I will remind you of it when we have that service under consideration.\*

The Litany concludes, as also do the offices for Morn-

\* See Lecture VIII.

ing and Evening Prayer, with the petition named after St. Chrysostom; and the Apostolic Benediction. That ancient and very beautiful prayer, whose author was probably either Chrysostom or Basil, is a most suitable conclusion to our supplications; it closes them with an appeal to Christ's own promise to be with His people when they are gathered together in His name; and to grant them what they "agree in asking." We have drawn near His mercy-seat, and asked for many blessings of many various sorts—for all things which *we* think "requisite and necessary, as well for the body as for the soul."

But we are not good judges always in these matters; "we know not what we should pray for;" we cannot say but that some things that we suppose may "hurt us" may indeed be "profitable to our salvation;" or that the same things would be good for all to have. But we do know that our case rests in the hands of One who "judgeth right;" and it is safest to leave each wish to Him, assured that

—— "it is goodness still  
That grants it or denies."

This is the spirit in which true faith will commit all to God, that in all things His will, not ours, may be done. "Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, *as may be most expedient for them.*" Yet, of some things we feel quite sure that they are "according to His will;" these we may absolutely claim; these we may ask as things of certain good, as things we cannot do without. All else that we have really need of our



Heavenly Father "will also freely give;" but these are blessings which we *must* obtain as ours; let other gifts be withheld, then, so that Thou wilt but grant us these—"in this world KNOWLEDGE OF THY TRUTH, and in the world to come LIFE EVERLASTING."

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NOTE C.

Wheatley states that, "till the last review in 1661, the Litany was designed to be a distinct service by itself." And this is the prevalent belief. But the Rev. Thomas Lathbury, in his History of the Book of Common Prayer, throws doubt on the correctness of it:—"It is often assumed that our Morning Service consists of three distinct Offices, which were not intended by our Reformers to be read or used at one time. By Grindal's [Archbishop of York] Injunctions of 1571, 'the minister is not to pause or stay between the Morning Prayer, Litany, and Communion, or the service appointed to be said when there is no Communion.' He was to say the Morning Prayer, Litany, and Communion in continuation.

. . . . "Grindal had been concerned in all the transactions of the Reformation, and well knew the intention of the Reformers. He knew that a division was contrary to custom, and the intentions of the Reformers. . . . . The mistake, which has been so often made, undoubtedly arose from not considering the various steps by which the reformation of the offices was carried on. For some time the Litany alone was used in churches as supplemental to the Romish services. Then the order of Communion was introduced. . . . After more than two years from Edward's accession, the whole Book of Common Prayer, comprising, with the Morning and Evening Service, the Litany and the Communion office, was put forth, and enjoined to be said in all churches; but no separation or saying one part at one time, and another at another, was ever contemplated. Not a particle of evidence in support of such a notion can be collected from the history of the

period. The assertion, however, has been repeated from one to another without inquiry, till many actually suppose that it is a truth."\*

It was to obviate irregular *departures* from the intention and established custom, that the rubrics before the Litany and Communion were cleared of ambiguity at the last review. In the Scotch Liturgy, authorized by Charles I., the rubric before the Litany is—"Here followeth the Litany, to be used after the third Collect at Morning Prayer, called the Collect for Grace, upon Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; and at other times when it shall be commanded by the Ordinary, *and without omission of any part of the daily Service of the Church on those days.*"—See Keeling's *Liturgiæ Brit.*, p. 40.

On the question, much agitated now, of a

#### DIVISION OF THE SERVICES,

the following remarks by the Rev. P. Freeman are worth consideration, as helping to meet the difficulty in default or delay of Convocation:—

Having shewn that our Morning Service is, in the main, a combination of the ancient Church offices of "Matins, Lauds, and Prime," and our Evening office of the old "Vespers" and "Compline," he says, "This alone might suggest the plan of once more, on occasion, and where need is, resolving them into their constituent elements. . . . They all but suggest *pauses*, serving to reduce them in practice to more services than one; each short enough for all conceivable purposes. The Morning office easily resolves itself into two, the one corresponding to Matins and Lauds; the other extending from the Creed, inclusive, to Prime; the Evening office falls, in like manner, into two Services, resembling Vespers and Compline. . . . All that is needed is, that such pauses be pre-arranged and understood, as occasions for free egress and ingress of worshippers; a bell, if necessary, being rung to give notice of the time. Such an arrangement seems to be contemplated by the frequent breaks in the old offices," &c.

He quotes a passage from the Rev. J. M. Neale's General Introduction to the History of the Eastern Church, to the effect that though there are nominally eight canonical "hours" in the Greek Church, prayers

\* See Lathbury's *History of the Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 80, 81.

are actually, for the most part, said three times daily : "Matins, Lauds, and Prime, by aggregation, early in the morning ; Tierce, Sexta, and the Liturgy (Communion) later ; Nones, Vespers, and Compline, by aggregation, in the evening."

It was probably for practical convenience that our Reformers similarly blended some of the old Offices, when they came to revise and purify them.—Principles of Divine Service, vol. I. p. 394.



## LECTURE VI.

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THE ORDER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S  
SUPPER,  
OR, HOLY COMMUNION.

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1 COR. xi. 28.

*"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."*

THE office of which I have to speak to-day is that of the Holy Communion.

This is, in the peculiar, appropriate meaning of that word, the "LITURGY" of our Church. The various forms used in the ancient Churches in celebrating the Lord's Supper are termed by ecclesiastical writers, "*Liturgies*," from a Greek word signifying "public service,"\* because this Eucharistic Office has been regarded from the time

\* *Λειτουργία*.—"In classical Greek, any public service, religious or secular; . . . in ecclesiastical writers, any sacred function, and in an especial and strict sense for the Eucharistic office. Thus we speak of the *Liturgies* of St. James, St. Mark, St. Chrysostom, &c., for the Service used in celebrating the Lord's Supper in the Churches of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople," &c.—Rev. F. Procter, p. 303.

of the Apostles downwards as emphatically and pre-eminently *the* Christian Service.

The Apostle Paul speaks in this chapter as if the chief, if not the ordinary, purpose for which Christians were expected to "come together into one place" was "to eat the Lord's Supper." The same thing may be inferred from many passages of the New Testament besides; and we learn from other historical sources that among the primitive Christians this "showing forth of the Lord's death" was considered as the highest—as it was certainly the Weekly and Festive—Act of their united worship.\* They called this sacred ordinance by various names, sometimes "*The breaking of bread*;"† sometimes "*Commemoration*," or "*Memorial*," from our Lord's own words here quoted by St. Paul;‡ sometimes the "*Eucharist*," from a Greek word meaning "thanksgiving," because this is peculiarly an offering of "praise and thanks-

\* The prevailing, though unfounded, impression is that they communicated *daily*. This practice was introduced, not for the many but the few, in the third and fourth centuries. "The Church, as it would seem, disheartened at the neglect of privileges manifested by the many, grasped at a higher condition, as they deemed it, for the few. And thence dated the recognition of privileged classes in Christianity—of a redeeming few who *could*, and a vast multitude who *could not*, enter upon the high and supreme, but at the same time the *designed, normal condition* for Christian men. The Apostolic system bore no trace of any such inequality. . . . With 'one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism,' was conjoined one Lord's Day Eucharistic Festival; the last, like all the rest, made equal for all."—*Principles of Divine Service*, vol. I. pp. 383-4.

† Acts, ii. 42.

‡ Verses 24 and 25.

giving." But the names with which we are most familiar now are those which are inserted in the heading of this service,—THE LORD'S SUPPER,—which is the Apostle's own expression in the chapter before us;\*—and the "HOLY COMMUNION,"—from the words of St. Paul,† "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

The word "communion" means "fellowship," or "joint partaking;" it is given to this rite because in it we seal our fellowship with Christ, and with our fellow-Christians in those blessings which Christ gives. Our jointly participating—*communicating*—in this rite is both a sign of our mutual Christian love, and also the appointed means, "to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive it,"‡ of making us joint-partakers of one common life—even the life of Christ—the life which makes us, although "many members," "one body in Christ Jesus."

The second and third rubrics which are prefixed to this service refer to the cases of "open and notorious evil-livers," and those persons who are known to be living in "malice and hatred;" and they direct that none such shall be admitted to this ordinance.

\* This name, however, did not first, nor for a long time, denote the Eucharist itself, but rather the supper or *love-feast* (Agapé), which was kept in the early days as a commemoration of our Lord's own last supper with his disciples, and in course of which it was usual to introduce—as upon "that first night"—the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

† 1 Cor. x. 16.

‡ Article xxviii.

There are, I need not tell you, many difficulties as to the enforcing of this discipline. In the cases, indeed, of persons leading notoriously scandalous lives, or who have been openly convicted by some legal sentence, and have made no profession of repentance, a minister would feel himself both authorized and bound to do as he is here directed. Such persons, if they were to present themselves (though that is neither common nor very likely), ought certainly to be refused.

But there are cases of a less 'notorious' sort, in which a clergyman would not be legally justified in repelling the parties, and yet may be aware of reasons such as are here referred to why they should not come. In the case of such persons, it will be his duty—besides reading the public Exhortation—to admonish them in private, and warn them, if necessary, of the profaneness they would incur in coming to that holy rite while yet impenitent and unreformed. This much he may certainly do, and *ought* to do, so as at least to clear himself, as far as lies with him, of all responsibility, and lay the matter upon the consciences of the individuals themselves.

Some would remove these rubrics altogether, "because they are not strictly carried out;" but it appears to me that their existence in the Prayer-Book has some advantages, even though they are not stringently enforced. They serve at least as admonitions so strong as to have all the moral weight of prohibitions. Though seldom pressed to the length of an absolute repulsion from the ordinance, they are a sort of standing *protest* on the part



of the Church against the sort of persons who might be justly excluded, and who should feel themselves excluded from it; they are a medium for the suggestion of self-reproof to persons of such a character as they describe.

And they are not without effect; for, in point of fact, 'notorious' offenders of this class rarely, if ever, come to the Lord's Table; conscience, and public opinion (which is, after all, the voice of the Christian Church finding expression in another way) will in most cases deter them.\* Indeed, many Christian Churches, even in primitive times, applied no other tests than these; the Apostle Paul, also (except in certain extreme cases which I shall notice in another Lecture), † seems satisfied to refer this matter of communicating to the conscience of each individual. He leaves it as a solemn and responsible question, to be determined between him and his unerring Judge,—“Let a man *examine himself*, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself.” ‡

\* The evil in our day appears, however, to consist in the *neglect* rather than the profanation of this ordinance. See next Lecture.

† See Lecture XIII.

‡ Clement of Alexandria, who lived about A. D. 195, speaks thus: “Some leave it upon the consciences of their people, whether they will take their part (in the Eucharist) or not; and the best rule to determine them in their participation or forbearance is their conscience.” Marshall, who quotes this passage, adds, “This therefore must be confessed a testimony which proves what the custom of some

Such self-examination is the duty of all who partake of this holy ordinance. As our Church Catechism puts it, it is required of all who come to the Lord's Supper, "to examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and be in charity with all men." And the first part of this service is designed to help us in these very ways.

The whole Communion Office consists of three general divisions: 1, the Ante-Communion or preparation; 2, the Administration;\* and, 3, the Post-communion, i. e. the Prayers, Thanksgiving, and Benediction, which conclude the service.

Much of the point and meaning of the introductory part is lost when the Office is broken off before the celebration of the Communion itself; and there are many who unfortunately never hear it at all, except in this way, as a broken, truncated, service. The first part is preparatory to the reception of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; but that they do not receive; they can-

Churches was in this affair; and should silence, I conceive, the complaints of those who bear so hard upon our present practice, for our promiscuous admission of all who offer themselves. Since we do no more than what was done in some Churches within the second or at most the beginning of the third century, and what was done in those Churches is far enough from being mentioned with disadvantage by an author of very great account in those earlier ages."—Marshall's *Penitential Discipline of the Primitive Church*, pp. 163, 164. Library of Ang. Cath. Theology, Oxford, 1844.

\* Called in ancient liturgies the "*Canon*."

not therefore enter into the meaning of the introduction, when they habitually neglect the ordinance to which it introduces.

Let us examine, first, this Introduction. The Office begins with the Lord's Prayer. Our Reformers, in conformity with ancient Liturgies, and with a like special meaning in each case, insert this petition in every separate Service,\* and each distinct division of every Office. Of this I will speak presently, observing only now that there does seem a peculiar fitness here, in making that form of prayer, which was our Lord's own gift, a part of that sacred ordinance which was his own special appointment.†

\* Query—Need this prayer be again repeated in the pulpit? Its use in this place is founded on the 55th Canon [on the "*Bidding of Prayers*"], but that Canon is, as regards the rest of it, practically obsolete.

† The usage is for the minister to repeat the Lord's Prayer in this place by himself *alone*, notwithstanding the rubric where it first occurs, in the order for Morning Prayer, directing that the people should repeat it "*with him*," both there "*and wherever else it is used in Divine Service*."

The reason of this may be (as the late Professor Blunt suggests) that in primitive times the Lord's Prayer was regarded as a portion of the prayer of *Consecration*, and therefore repeated by the priest alone. The clause, "Give us this day our daily *bread*," was used with a peculiar reference to the Holy Communion.—See Blunt's *Duties of the Parish Priest*, Lecture X.

Procter (p. 322) quotes a passage from an Epistle of Gregory the Great, asserting (without sufficient proof, however), that "it was the custom of the Apostles *with this prayer only* to consecrate the host." It is likely, then, that the traditional custom, derived from the unreformed services, has here prevailed over the general rubric which directs the joint repetition of this prayer by minister and people.

In order to assist us in the business of preparation, a stated portion of God's Word is uniformly read, consisting of the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments. These are inserted in this Office in order to serve as *general heads for self-examination*. This is expressly affirmed in the first of the preparatory Exhortations, where warning is given, "so to search and examine our own consciences, that we may come holy and clean to such an heavenly feast in the marriage-garment required by God," &c. The Exhortation continues; "the way and means thereto is: First to examine your lives and conversations by the rule of God's Commandments; and whereinsoever ye shall perceive yourselves to have offended, either by will, word, or deed, there to bewail your own sinfulness, and to confess yourselves to Almighty God with full purpose of amendment of life."

But you remember how God commanded that the people of Israel should be purified before the giving of the law; and He intended that external purification as an instructive symbol of the *inward purity*—the "willingness to do His will"—"the honest and good heart"—with which we should at all times hear his doctrine. The "pure in heart" will best receive that "law of the Lord," which is "an undefiled law, converting the soul." Those who entreat most earnestly of God, "Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults"—"Try me, and seek the ground of my heart; prove me, and examine my thoughts; look well if there be any way of wickedness in me"—those servants shall be best "taught" by the "commandment of the Lord, which is pure, and giveth

light unto the eyes." Accordingly, and in the very spirit of the Psalmist's thoughts,\* there is prefixed to the Commandments—placed in the forefront of this holy celebration—that beautiful and well-known petition, the COLLECT FOR PURITY. We are reminded in the very outset of our self-examination, that we are making it as in the sight of Him "to whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid." We ask Him to "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit,"† in order that "we may draw near with a true heart, and in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience."‡ And it is by the spirit of the commandments, not by the letter only, we are to judge ourselves; they are a guide and help in self-examination, not our standard of appeal; it is not as the Jewish code, but in so far as they contain those moral precepts which are right in themselves,—and for *that* reason binding upon all men, in all countries, of all Churches, and all times,—that these com-

\* See Psalms xix. and cxxxix.

† This collect is at least 900 years old; Palmer (in his *Origines, or Antiquities of the English Ritual*, chap. iv.) mentions that it is found in the Sacramentary of Leofric, Bishop of Exeter, in the 10th century. It has been traced back, though not so certainly, even as far as the 8th century.

Note the phrase, "worthily magnify Thy holy name" [i. e., "*as it deserves*"] as being parallel with the expression in the Collect for Ash-Wednesday, "that we, *worthily* lamenting our sins," i. e., lamenting them *as they deserve to be lamented*. See Appendix to this Lecture for explanation of some other words and phrases in the Prayer-Book.

‡ Heb. x. 22, 23.

mandments are binding upon us; and we are therefore to examine ourselves as to our obedience and our state of heart, under the broader, clearer light with which the Gospel aids us in our search.\* This Lesson from the book of the old covenant is chosen, rather than, e. g., the Sermon on the Mount, or parts of the Epistle to the Romans; because it is the shortest scriptural compendium in which such general heads for self-examination are to be found; but what we are to "learn from these commandments" is well expanded and unfolded for our assistance in the Catechism of our Church; and it is *as thus expanded* we are to use them in the searching of our consciences; as each one is repeated, asking "*God mercy for our transgression thereof for the time past,† and grace to keep the same for the time to come.*" Thus, for example, (1) "Thou shalt do no murder." You are "become a transgressor" of this law, unless you can truly say that

\* See "on Abolition of the Law," in Archbishop Whately's *Difficulties of St. Paul*. He thus expresses the distinction between moral [or Natural] and Positive [or Ceremonial] precepts:—"The first refer to "things which are commanded, because they are right;" the second, to "things which are right because they are commanded." See also Bishop Butler's remarks on "Moral and Positive Duties."—*Analogy*, p. II., chap. i.

† The Scotch Liturgy says:—"Either according to the letter, or to the mystical [spiritual] importance of the said commandment." After the Commandments, the American Prayer-Book adds, "*Then the minister may say, Hear also what our Lord Jesus Christ saith, 'Thou shalt love the Lord,' &c.—Matt. xxii. 37-40. After which is read the second of the Collects inserted at the conclusion of our Communion office.*"

you "hurt nobody by word or deed," and "bear no malice nor hatred in your heart." (2). "Honour thy father and thy mother," &c. Though you be orphaned of father and mother, you may have to ask God's mercy for the transgression of this law, because, as the Catechism reminds you, you learn from it a wider than filial duty. And (3), Although after the Fourth Commandment you do not ask the Lord to have mercy on you for not keeping the SEVENTH DAY of the week holy—the Jewish sabbath,—and though you certainly do not intend to ask Him to "incline your heart" to keep SATURDAY holy for the future, yet in the spirit and moral aim of this Commandment you are undoubtedly concerned. As the Catechism, referring to this Commandment, instructs you, you learn from it "to serve God truly ALL the days of your life." The same great general truth—that all time is God's—all days, God's gift to man,—which was impressed on the Jews by the consecration of the seventh day, is still impressed on the Christian Church by the peculiar dedication of one day in seven. We know, indeed, that the Apostles and the Christian Church after them, observe a different *day*, in a different *manner*, and for a different *reason*. But still the Christian's Rest-Day, kept in commemoration of Christ's Resurrection, besides reminding us on every First Day of the week of that great fact, the basis of our faith and hope, does teach us, from week to week—just as their Sabbath taught the Jews—that, all time being God's, it is our duty to serve him *all* the days of our life. So far as we have neglected, therefore, the right use of this Christian festival, and forgotten to apply the lessons which it teaches,

we have good reason to say after this Fourth Commandment, and according to the spirit of it, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law."

After the prayer for the Sovereign, we next proceed to read the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for the day. These prayers and scriptural selections are, for the most part, of very ancient date. They consist of two series, which have been distinguished as doctrinal and practical. For the Church's year, commencing with Advent Sunday, is divided into two parts. The first of these, from Advent to Trinity, commemorates the history of our Lord's earthly life, and presents us with those historical facts on which the Christian religion is based. Christ's Incarnation and Nativity; His Circumcision; His Epiphany [or *Manifestation* to the Gentiles]; His Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation; His public Ministry and Miracles; His Agony; His Cross and Passion; His Death and Burial; His glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and, lastly, the "Coming of the Holy Ghost" in fulfilment of His promise—are all in turn presented to our minds.

Thus, you observe, in every yearly round our Church brings before us the great facts of Christianity in the same order in which they were at first historically developed. And so we are reminded always of the important circumstance—peculiarly important to remember at the present day—that ours is essentially an *historical* religion;\* that it differs from all other religions in this

\* "It is obvious that Christianity, and the proof of it, are both historical."—Butler's Anal., p. II., chap. viii. There is a striking and masterly passage on this head in Aids to Faith, Essay ii. pp. 56-72, by Bishop Fitzgerald.



respect, that it is founded on proved facts; for it is on these facts our doctrines rest; or, rather, our doctrines *are* those very facts, put only in another way, as bearing in their practical consequences upon ourselves.

Christ was made man—therefore we believe that He is one with us; He suffered and was tempted—therefore we trust Him as our merciful sympathizing Priest. He “died unto sin once”—therefore we count Him our Saviour, and ourselves for His sake “dead indeed unto sin;” He rose again—therefore we know He has indeed redeemed us, and that, “because He lives, we shall live also;” He has ascended into heaven—therefore we believe that He is doing there for us “exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think;” He has “received gifts for men,” even the promised gift of His own blessed Spirit; and having “shed forth this”—“the earnest of our inheritance”—He gave us His pledge for all; we know that He is with us truly, though not visibly; and we believe that He will come again, manifestly, as we “have seen Him go,” to be the “Judge of quick and dead.”

The Church’s annual festivals close with the commemoration of the Holy Trinity.\* This is, as it were, the summing up of all the previous commemorations; reducing all other facts to this one practical issue, that “through Christ Jesus we have access by one Spirit

\* This was not kept as a separate commemoration till nearly the end of the 10th century, when the encroachments of the Arians and other heretics suggested it. It was first fixed to this particular Sunday, in the 14th century, by Pope John XXII.

unto the Father."\* Yes ; this is the great truth that brings the doctrine of the Trinity so near to us—brings it to bear on ourselves, on our wants, our hopes, and our duties—as a *practical* revelation ; the theme of daily thanksgiving, the guide of daily life.

In the second part of the Christian year—from Trinity to Advent—the portions of Scripture are chosen generally so as to bring before us a series of practical lessons derived from our Lord's doctrine and example, and from the teaching of His Apostles ; in these we are reminded and instructed to lead Christian lives, agreeing with the truths we have commemorated.

In the first, or doctrinal, half of the year, you will have noticed, with regard to the Gospels, that they form (as I have said) a continuous history—selected from the four Evangelists—of our Lord's life and work ; and that the Epistles are gathered, now from one Apostle, now from another, so as to harmonize with, and be a doctrinal commentary on, the Gospel. In the second, or practical, half of the year—i. e., from Trinity to Advent—the Epistles are (with a few exceptions, easily explained), taken consecutively from the Epistles of St. Paul, while the Gospels may seem at first sight not to be chosen in any order. They are not, however, taken at random, but are selected carefully and, it appears, upon this principle—to illustrate the teaching of the Epistle—to give from the "Master's" life some practical exemplification of the doctrine or lesson inculcated by His "servants."†

\* Ephes. ii. 18.

† This arrangement for the Sundays from Trinity to Advent was

I have already spoken of the Collects; I need therefore only remind you of what is, I trust, so familiar to your own experience, that it need hardly be recalled—the value which these short, simple, easily-remembered prayers possess. They are, for the most part, a summary of the teaching contained in the Epistle and Gospel of the Communion service; they are still, as they were meant in olden times to be, a memorial of the lesson learnt from those “Eucharistic Scriptures”—a keynote for the Christian’s meditation and prayer throughout the week. In closely examining the Collects of our Prayer-Book, and teaching them with Bible refer-

an improvement made by the Western Church upon the Greek Eastern use, which is said to have been introduced by St. Jerome about the end of the 4th century. Whoever was the framer of the Lectionary of Epistles and Gospels—called “Comes Hieronymi,” which is so nearly accordant with our own—it is certainly of great antiquity, as is proved by the homilies of ancient Fathers upon these very Scripture portions. The exceptions referred to in the text are (1) the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 5th after Trinity, to finish the reading of the General (or Catholic) Epistles begun at Easter; (2) the 18th Sunday after Trinity, which was originally one of the “*Dominica Vacantes*,” *Vacant Sundays*. It had no proper service, on account of the Ordination which took place on the Saturday evening before, or early on Sunday morning. Afterwards, a particular Epistle and Gospel were affixed to it, which are not parts of the consecutive system, but specially adapted (as Wheatley points out) to the solemnities of the Ordination season. The (3) exception is the 25th after Trinity, which Sunday was made an exception because “a kind of preparation or forerunner to Advent.”—See Wheatley; and compare on the whole Epistle and Gospel system, the Rev. P. Freeman’s *Principles of Divine Service*, vol. ii. p. 408-415.

ences, one is astonished at the amount of scriptural truth which they compress—with which they may, by careful instruction, become permanently associated. They are wrought up into our minds and memories when we are children; they help fully as much as creeds, perhaps more, to keep us steadfast in our Christian faith; they are the best aids that we can find in private prayer, and towards an earnest and yet sober spirit of devotion; and in men's closing hours the words of these familiar prayers are among the last which the failing recollection treasures, and the dying ear loves to catch.

The custom which prevails in most of our churches, of the people all standing up at the reading of the Gospel, is in obedience to a rubric which expressly enjoins it. And it does seem most natural to do so, as an expression of our thanks to God for sending to us the light of His holy Gospel. We do not stand up during the *Lessons*, because that would be burdensome, and might prevent attention; but here there is no reason against doing so, and a very good reason for it; for it is only decent to assume this reverential posture, when, as the Gospel is announced, we join in the thanksgiving that is then sung or said, "Glory be to Thee, O Lord."\*

\* The custom of repeating this thanksgiving before the Gospel is as old as the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom; its use was enjoined in King Edward's First Prayer-Book—" *The Clerks and People shall answer: Glory be to Thee, O Lord!*" The practice has continued in most places ever since, and in many churches—as has been always the 'use,' so far as I know, in my own—the ancient custom is still

The Nicene Creed was introduced into this service, both (1) as a test of orthodoxy before admission to Communion, and (2) as reminding us of one part of that threefold Baptismal pledge which we are about to renew in this holy Sacrament; our promise, namely, "*to believe all the articles of the Christian faith.*"

After the Creed is read, and such notices as are required have been given out according to the rubric, the direction is that the **SERMON** shall here follow; after which come the Offertory and Prayer for the Church Militant, concluding with the Blessing. One of the points required in those who come to the Lord's Table, is to be "in charity with all men;" and so an opportunity is given us here of exercising our Christian love in one particular way, on which the Scriptures very earnestly insist—the giving and communicating of our earthly goods to our fellow-Christians who are in need. And many of the sentences which are ordered to be read are very pointed hints for self-examination as to the practical sincerity both of our thankful remembrance of Christ's death, and of our charity to those for whom He died; as, for example, this one:—"Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"\*

kept up of singing an "Alleluia," when the Gospel is ended. In some English churches, the Gospel being ended, the people say or sing, "Thanks be to Thee, O Lord;" or "Thanks be to Thee, O Lord, for Thy holy Gospel."

\* At first the words of the rubric were, "saying one or more of

This offering is not enough regarded by all persons as a part of the religious service; but that is the light, undoubtedly, in which our Saviour's own words place it: "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto ME." The Gospel always asks these ministries of Christian help as offerings to Christ Himself—as works of love to be "showed for His name's sake."

And thus it is that our Church instructs us to regard the Offertory of this service; witness the rubric which directs that when the deacons "shall receive the alms for the poor, and other devotions of the people in a decent basin," they shall "reverently bring it to the priest, who shall humbly *present* and place it upon the holy table."

The "other devotions" here referred to meant any gifts for religious purposes; that is to say, (as a rubric was added at the end of the service to explain) such offerings as people chose at that time to make for any "pious and charitable uses." And this explains the meaning of the word "*oblations*" in the prayer that follows. The presbyter says, "We beseech Thee now to accept our alms and oblations." This does not seem (as some have thought) to signify the elements of bread and wine. There would not indeed be any objection to call-

these sentences *of Scripture*," but the two latter words were subsequently struck out, because amongst these sentences are two from the Apocrypha, which, therefore, are not "*of Scripture*." The Scotch Liturgy [of 1637] adds the following very suitable passages; their addition to our own would be an improvement:—Exodus, xxv. 2; Deut. xvi. 16; 1 Chron. xxix. 10; Mark, xii. 41-44, &c.

ing them by that name here; for they are yet unconsecrated, and therefore it could not be supposed to mean that they are, in any sacrificial, or propitiatory, sense, oblations; only that, as God's creatures—His donations and gifts to man—they are brought first to God, in order that He may take and bless them to our use; after the language which we find in many of the ancient liturgies (and in the office of the Scotch Episcopal Church at the present day), "*Lord, we offer Thee thine own, out of what Thou hast bountifully given us.*"\*

Notwithstanding, from the circumstances under which the words were inserted, we have reason to conclude that the term "oblations" denotes here the same thing as the

\* Wheatley takes *this* view of the meaning of "*oblations*," and refers in favour of it to Patrick and Mede. Palmer (chap. iv.) appears to think that both terms, "*oblations*," and "*devotions*," may have comprised *all the offerings*, "*which were of various sorts*," consisting of "*money, vestments, and other precious gifts*;" always including the elements of bread and wine, which, he says, "*all the people offered.*"

But Cardwell (p. 382, note) makes it appear that the words "*alms and oblations*" *both* refer to the offerings made in *money*. For it was on the same occasion when the words "*and oblations*" were added, that the rubric was changed thus—"shall receive the alms and other devotions *in a decent basin*;" and that the last rubric was inserted to distinguish the alms for the poor from money given for "*other pious uses*." He argues it also from the fact that the rubric (immediately before the prayer) which was *proposed* at this review by Sancroft, ran thus—"The priest shall then *offer up* and place upon the table;" but that "*the words offer up were not adopted*," thus showing that no oblation or offering of the bread and wine could have been denoted.

"other devotions," that is to say, those *money offerings* for "other pious uses" which people were accustomed to present at the Communion Feast. I should not have said so much upon this point, only that misunderstandings seem to exist respecting it.

With regard to this prayer for the Church militant, I need not show at any length how very suitable it is in such a service. The Lord's Supper is (besides its further significance) a sign and a bond "of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another;" and it is here therefore urged upon us, as an expression of this wide Christian charity—to "pray for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth"—to "make prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men."\*

Thus far this Office is to be read "if there be no Communion." In that case the rule is, to read (after the prayer for the Church militant) one or more of the Collects which are to be found at the end of the Communion Office, concluding with the Blessing.

There is no doubt that this is the way in which the

\* The words "*militant here in earth*" were added [A. D. 1552] at Bucer's suggestion, in order to exclude the practice of praying for the dead. But at the last revision [A. D. 1661] the thanksgiving for all God's "servants departed," &c., was added, with the prayer following; the title, however, remaining as before, to signify that that prayer is rather for ourselves than for those who are no longer of the "*Church militant*"—whose "*warfare* is accomplished," and who "rest in the Lord."



service should conclude, after the Sermon is ended, according to the order plainly laid down. Custom indeed has given a sort of sanction to the laxer practice which (in Ireland) is, in most places, this—on ordinary occasions, to have a collection before the Sermon, omitting altogether the prayer for the Church militant; and, when the Lord's Supper is administered, to have two collections, one before the Sermon, and the other after it, at what is, most incorrectly, called "The Second Service." But it is much to be questioned, if in such a case—where no necessity nor even inconvenience hinders obedience to the rubric—a clergyman has any right whatever to depart from the Order of the Prayer-Book. Usage *versus* statute-law may sometimes hold good; but in this case the plea is hardly valid. And if all clergymen would act upon rules which in themselves no one can object to, people would soon admit the improvement resulting from a return to the order prescribed. It is the non-observance of them by some which gives rise to perplexity, misunderstanding, suspicions, and evil surmisings, on the part of our laity. Few would complain of the addition of the Prayer referred to. The service would not be lengthened by five minutes by reading it, and these few minutes might, with advantage, be taken from the Sermon. The omission of this prayer has deprived the alms-giving, still customary,\* of its true character, and made it, instead of an "Offertory," a mere "collection," that breaks in upon and interrupts the religious service, but is not

\* At least in Ireland.

looked upon as forming any part of it. Leaving the words unsaid—"We beseech Thee most mercifully to accept these our alms and oblations. . . . which we offer unto thy Divine Majesty"—there is nothing to mark the contributions of the people as *offerings to God*. There is no dedication of our gifts to Him in whose name only our gifts are acceptable. And, in the second place, the omission of the Prayer for the Church militant makes the Sermon appear to many persons as the crown and climax of the whole service; and thus has a practical tendency, which is most hurtful, to exalt the preaching above the Prayers. In this—as in all cases—the Prayer-Book order will, on reflection, seem to most persons the soundest and best.

The Exhortations which are inserted after the prayer for the Church militant are due to our Reformers altogether; the second of them, it is said, to Peter Martyr, the friend of Luther and Melancthon. At the time when they were provided, regular Communion had ceased to be the rule; "the time of celebration was somewhat uncertain, and long omission had made some ignorant and others forgetful of their duty."\* The first of them contains very emphatic warnings against the dangers of "unworthily receiving,"—such warnings as the circumstances of those days of moral laxity required,—and yet so very strong as perhaps to discourage overmuch. The second, which is undoubtedly the preferable form to use under present circumstances, consists of a most earnest invitation, reproaching the "*negligent*" for disregarding

\* See Wheatley.

this plain duty. and for refusing to "*come thereto, being so lovingly called and bidden by God himself.*"\*

There is a passage at the close of the first Exhortation, on which objections have been raised—" *If there be any who requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel,*" &c.

Now it is clear, both from these words themselves, and from the history of their adoption, that there is no sanction whatever conveyed in them for the systematic practice of private confession, and the reception of priestly absolution as a sacramental rite.

I. It is clear from the history. For the words in the old Office had been, "Confess and open his sin and grief secretly;" but at the revision in A. D. 1552, the words "*confess,*" "*sin,*" and "*secretly*" were purposely struck

\* The rubric after the Creed says that *then* "notice shall be given of the Holy Communion." And the strict interpretation of this and the rubric after the Prayer for the Church militant is, that the first notice shall be an announcement merely, and that one or other of these Exhortations is to be read as consequent upon that notice, "*after the sermon or homily ended.*" It was not, however, expected, that they would be read more than a few times in the year; and now that Communion is more frequent and regular, it would seem out of place to read them once or twice, if not oftener, in every month. Accordingly the general custom has grown to be this—after the Creed to give notice of Communion, in the words of the opening clause of the First Exhortation. The Second Exhortation might be read occasionally with great advantage.

out, and the words "open his grief" alone retained ; and that because our Reformers were anxious to discourage, as far as possible,—as far as the people, who had not long emerged from Romanism, were able to bear it—the practice of individual and private confession to which the laity had been accustomed. This is confirmed by the fact, that at the same review the public General Confession and Absolution were placed at the beginning of the Morning and Evening Services, with the intention of "superseding, in all ordinary cases, private confession and absolution."\*

2. At this revision, also, the significant words, "that by the ministry of God's holy word he may receive the benefit of absolution," were substituted for the stronger expressions of the previous form, which were, "That of us, a minister of God and of the Church, he may receive comfort and absolution."

II. As to the words themselves ; the expression "open his grief" does not refer to a formal confession, or any confession involving, as the Romish practice did, a particular enumeration of every known sin. Nor do the latter words, "benefit of absolution," refer to a set form. Permission is here given for those who may require it—i. e. the weak or ignorant, or troubled in conscience—to make "a confidential disclosure of their difficulties with a view to counsel, and of their sorrows with a view to

\* Freeman's Principles of Divine Service, vol. i. p. 315. The above intention is apparent from the "Homily of Repentance," 2nd Part. See also, for further proofs, Procter, p. 206-9.

comfort.”\* It would be very well if this were done in all such cases; and it *is* done to a greater or less extent, not only in our Church, but in every Christian community, as almost every minister can testify from his experience. But, at least, it is not reasonable to quarrel with a *permission*, of which no one is asked to avail himself unless he wishes.

Observe, again, that it is not to “a priest,” but to some “*minister of God’s word*,” they are to go; it cannot therefore be for any *priestly* absolution, in that peculiar sense which some would understand. And it is said,—“to some *discreet or learned minister* ;” therefore the help he is to give does not consist in the performance of a mere official act—the pronouncing of a set form of given words—but in the giving of such counsel as he may be best qualified, by “*learning and discretion*,” to gather from the word of God.

All this, however, may be explained and proved most clearly by the language of our Reformers themselves, whose writings are the best key, of course, that we can find to the interpretation of the address which they drew up.

First, then, here is an extract from the Injunctions of Edward VI., published in A. D. 1547 :—

“Therefore that this damnable vice of despair may be clearly taken away ; and firm belief and stedfast hope surely conceived of all their parishioners . . . they (the ministers) shall learn and have always

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\* See a very judicious and able pamphlet, entitled, *An Inquiry into the Doctrine of the Church of England on Private Confession and Absolution*, by the Rev. C. Elliott, M. A. Rivingtons, London.

in a readiness such comfortable places and sentences of Scripture as do set forth the mercy, *benefits*, and goodness of Almighty God toward all penitent and believing persons, that they may at all times (when necessity shall require) promptly comfort their flock *with the lively word of God, which is the only stay of man's conscience.*"\*

Here is another passage, translated from a document also published in the reign of Edward, and drawn up chiefly by Archbishop Cranmer:—

"Therefore, if any of those who are preparing themselves for the Lord's table be wavering in any part of religion, or wounded in conscience, let him have free access to the minister, that he may receive from him *consolation and alleviation of his grief*; and if he shall fully approve himself to the minister, let him be absolved, if need be, from crime."†

Here is another passage, from one of the Homilies of our Church, the "Sermon on Repentance:"—

"Being therefore not led with the conscience thereof (i. e. of private, auricular confession) let us, with fear and trembling and with a true contrite heart, use that kind of confession that God doth command in His Word; and then doubtless, as He is faithful and righteous, He will forgive us our sins, and make us clean from all wickedness. I do not say, but that if any do find themselves troubled in conscience, they may repair to their learned curate or pastor, *or to*

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\* Cardwell's Documentary Annals, vol. i. p. 14. The same words are repeated in Queen Elizabeth's Injunctions, A. D. 1559: see Cardwell, p. 186.

† Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum, p. 87 (of the edition printed in London in A. D. 1640). The latter part of this passage seems to refer to cases of persons formally debarred from the Lord's table by ecclesiastical censures, or deterred from coming to it by consciousness of having done something to *deserve* such exclusion.—See Lecture XIII.

*some other godly learned man*, and show the trouble and doubt of their conscience to them, that they may receive at their hands the comfortable salve of God's word; but it is against the true Christian liberty that any man should be bound to the numbering of his sins, as it hath been used heretofore in the times of blindness and ignorance."\*

Here is an extract from a sermon preached by Bishop Latimer *only a few days after the Prayer-Book of 1552 came into circulation*:—†

"As touching confession, I tell you that they that can be content with the general absolution which every minister of God's word giveth in his sermon . . . . all these that be so minded, shall have remission of their sins.

"Now, I say, they that be content with this general absolution, it is well; but they that are not satisfied with it, *they may go* to some godly learned minister which is able to instruct and comfort them *with the word of God*; to minister *that same* unto them to the contentation and quieting of their consciences."

And the same Bishop Latimer, in another sermon, after condemning the practice of auricular confession, and again urging to a "right and true confession" unto God—speaks thus regarding this sort of occasional con-

\* This Second Book of Homilies was the work of Edward's reign, and must be attributed to Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer. It has been sometimes said to be the work of Elizabeth's reign, and due to Jewel; but this is a mistake. See Carwithen's History of the Church of England, vol. i. p. 458.

† Sermons and Remains of Bishop Latimer, pp. 12, 13—Parker Society edition, vol. ii., 1845. The date of this sermon is Advent Sunday, 1552, and it was on All-Saints' Day the revised Prayer-Book came into use.

*sultation* of the people with their pastor or any other who is instructed in the word of God:—

“And those which feel themselves grieved in conscience might go to a learned man, and there fetch of him comfort *of the word of God*, and so come to a quiet conscience.”\*

These passages interpret plainly enough the meaning of the words in the Exhortation. They show clearly that those who would endeavour on these words to re-establish the practice of private confession and priestly absolution, are only trying to build up what our Reformers were anxious to pull down. And the attempt to bind confession of *this* sort, as a duty, will serve only to bring into contempt and disregard that sort of confidence between the pastor and his people which it is most desirable should be maintained; but which, to be maintained as our Church intends—and so as to be really useful—must always be left entirely free and optional.

What our Church permits, and recommends in certain cases—to such only as desire and need it—is a *confidential consultation*; the object of it is, that by the ministry of God’s word the troubled conscience may be assisted to appropriate God’s “comfortable promises;” that those who are afraid to come to the Lord’s table may, if repentant, be taught to feel themselves such persons as God is willing to receive; such, therefore, as the Church also—acting in Christ’s name—may warrant certainly in

\* Latimer’s Sermons, p. 180. This sermon was preached on the third Sunday in Epiphany, A. D. 1553, a few months after Edward’s second book came into use. It is on the “cleansing of the leper,” and the entire is well worth reading.



coming; such persons as may be earnestly invited by her and by her ministers to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."

This is the meaning of our Church. And those who represent her as "*enforcing* the duty of private confession," and sanctioning the use of "private absolution," are really setting themselves in opposition to her teaching; and departing from the known spirit and the declared intentions of our Reformers themselves.

In the next Lecture I purpose to resume the consideration of this service.

#### NOTE D.

##### NAMES OF HOLYDAYS, ETC. EXPLAINED.

**EMBER WEEKS.**—These are the four "solemn times" or seasons at which ordinations are appointed to be held, viz. in Lent, Easter, September, and December. Canon XXXI. decrees "that no Deacons or Ministers be made but only upon the Sundays immediately following *Jejunia quatuor temporum*, commonly called *Ember Weeks*, appointed in ancient times for prayer and fasting, purposely for this cause at their first institution," &c. Various derivations have been given; the most probable is that suggested in Notes and Queries (vol. vi. p. 145, second series), Ember, a corruption of *quatuor tempora*, "four seasons." We get it through the Dutch, which is *quatertemper*, or *quatemper*; the German being *Quatember*, of which Ember is an abbreviation.

**CHRISTMAS.**—The terminal syllable "Mass" is, here, the Saxon *messe* [Danish *messe*], meaning "a feast;" see Bosworth's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary. Compare our own word "*mess*," whence "*mess-mate*." Thus Christmas means Christ's mass, the Feast of Christ: so Candle-mas, Michael-mas, Martin-mas. The Roman "Mass," however, is otherwise derived; being from "*Missa*," part of the form

used in dismissing the people—" *Ite, missa est* : " others derive it from Heb. " *missach*," an oblation.

EPHANY.—From a Greek word (Epiphaneia) meaning "manifestation."

SEPTUAGESIMA ; SEXAGESIMA ; QUINQUAGESIMA.—Quinquagesima Sunday is the *fiftieth* day (inclusive) before Easter ; and so the two Sundays previous are called, for brevity's sake, by the next round numbers, or *decads*, Sexagesima, *sixtieth* ; and Septuagesima, *seventieth*.

LENT.—From *Lencten* [Anglo-Saxon], denoting "Spring ;" so called (it is said) because the days then *lengthen*.

PASSION WEEK.—"Passion"—in this sense, "*suffering*"—occurs in the Litany ("by thy cross and *passion*"), and in other parts of the Prayer-Book ; compare also Acts, i. 3.

EASTER.—A Saxon term ; "from the Goddess Eostre, whose festivities were in April."—Bosworth's Ang.-Sax. Dict. Our Pagan ancestors called April Eostre-month. Eostre is the same as ASTAETE—ASHTAROTH.

ROGATION DAYS.—[See Table at end of Calendar]. The three days preceding Ascension Thursday ; from the Latin "*Rogatio*," which corresponded to the Greek term "Litany," meaning "supplication ;" because on these days processions were held, and solemn Litanies appointed, supplicating God to "bless the fruits of the earth."—*Wheatley*.

WHITSUNTIDE.—The common derivation is *White Sunday*, from the white garments of the newly baptized. One objection to this seems to be that the true White Sunday, *Dominica in albis* (or, as some ritualists give it, *post albas*, "sc. *depositas*") is the first Sunday after Easter, called also "Low Sunday," because part of the Easter services were repeated on it, though a feast of lesser degree than Easter. On this day "those that were baptized on Easter Eve laid aside those white robes or chrysoms which were put upon them at their baptism."—*Wheatley*. Another objection is, that the correct form of the name is (like Easter-Day, Christmas-Day), *Whitsun-day*, not Whit-Sunday ; and so we have Whitsun-Monday ; Whitsun-Tuesday ; Whitsun-tide.

A better derivation seems to be that suggested in *Notes and Queries* ;\* connecting the word with the German *Pfingsten* or Pentecost ; *Pfingsttag* being the German for Whitsunday. *Pfingsten* is, in the Swabian patois, " Whingsten ; " in the Bavarian, " Whingsten ; " and in the dialect of Strasburg, " Whindsten." This last comes very near to our " Whitsun." Jac. Serenius (*Eng. and Swed. Dict.*) gives " PINGST : Whitsunday, Pentecost ; PINGSTEN TIDEN, Whitsuntide." In favour of " Whitsun " being some corrupt form of a synonym for " Pentecost " is the fact that in every European language the name for the day is " Pentecost ; " thus, as above, and Fr., "*Le jour de la Pentecôte.*" Ital.—"*Il giorno della Pentecoste.*" Span.—"*Día da Pentecostes,*" Dutch.—"*Der Pingsten dag.*" Sax.—"*Pentecostenes masse dag*" (feastday). In *Notes and Queries* (first Series, vol. ii.) another derivation is given—more curious perhaps than true—in a quotation from the *Liber Festivalis*, printed by Wynkin de Worde, also by Caxton. The words are these :—

" *In die Pentecostis.*

" Good men and wymmen, this day is called Wytsonday, because the H. Ghost brought wytte [wit] and wisdom into Christis disciples, and so by her preaching after, into all Christendom.

" Then may ye understand that many hath wytte but not wisdom. For there ben many that hath wytte to preche well, but there ben few that have wisdom to live well."

In *Notes and Queries*, first Series, vol. iv., there is a quotation from Rich. Rolle, a Saxon poet of the fourteenth century :—

" This day Witsonday is cald [called],  
For wisdom and wit seuene fald [sevenfold]  
Was given to ye Apostles on yis day ;  
For wise in alle things were they,  
To speak withouten mannes lore  
Al manere langages everi where " [everywhere].

But this looks like a quaint conceit ; and was perhaps intended only as a quibble.

\* See *Notes and Queries*, First Series, ii. 129 ; iv. 206 ; Second Series, 99, 153,

## PHRASES AND WORDS NOT EXPLAINED IN THE LECTURES.

**LET.**—Coll. 4th Sunday in Advent, "sore let." "Let" here is used in the nearly obsolete sense, "*kept back*;" see Exod. v. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 7.

**ENDEAVOUR OURSELVES.**—Coll. 2nd Sunday after Easter, "daily endeavour ourselves to follow;" i. e. *exert ourselves*. Compare the Preface in Confirmation, and the Answers in the Ordination Services, "I will endeavour myself, the Lord being my helper."

**INDIFFERENTLY.**—Pr. for Ch. Mil., "indifferently minister justice," i. e. *impartially*; "without respect of persons."

**PREVENT.**—Coll. in Comm. Serv., "Prevent us, O Lord," i. e. *go before*, as our *guide*. So Coll. for 17th Sun. after Trin., "We beseech Thee that Thy grace may always *prevent* and follow us." Compare Psalm lix. 10, "The God of my mercy shall *prevent* me." It is used also in the kindred sense to *anticipate*, *be beforehand with*. Thus, in Psalm xxi. 3, "Thou *preventest* him with the blessings of goodness," i. e. *bestowest before he asks*. Psalm cxix. 148, "Mine eyes *prevent* [*anticipate*] the night watches," i. e. *awake before the night watches come*. Matt. xvii. 25 [where many fail to notice the proof of our Lord's foreknowledge], "And when they were come into the house, Jesus *prevented* [*anticipated* (*προεφθασεν*)] him, saying, what thinkest thou, Simon?" Also, 1 Thess. iv. 15, "We which are alive . . . shall not *prevent* them that are asleep,"—"have precedence of,"—or (as Alford gives it), "*get before*, so that they be left behind and fail of the prize," [*οὐ μὴ φθάσωμεν*].

**ORNAMENTS.**—Note prefixed to Order for Morning Prayer. "The Ornaments of the Church," &c. Ornaments include all the *fittings*, as e. g. pulpit, font, reading-pew, alms-chest, &c., as well as the surplice, hood, &c., used by the Minister.

**INJURY.**—2nd Exhort. Communion Service, "How great injury ye do unto God," i. e. how great an *affront* ye offer. "Injury" is from Lat. *Injuria*, meaning *insult*.

**WRETCHLESSNESS.**—Art. xvii. The same as the modern word "Recklessness." The Latin is "*securitatem*," literally, *carelessness*.

DECLARED.—Art. xxi. states that things decreed by councils as necessary to salvation have no authority, unless it may be *declared* that they be taken out of Holy Scripture. A recent objector, whose book has had some sale, triumphantly exclaims—"Aye—*declared*—but the question is, by whom?" The Latin would have told him the meaning—"nisi *ostendi* possint." Declared is "proved"—"made manifest;" as in Matt. xiii. 31; Acts, xiii. 41; Rom. i. 4, &c.



## LECTURE VII.

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### OFFICE OF THE HOLY COMMUNION.

#### THE EXHORTATION.

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1 COR. XI. 28, 29.

*"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."*

It has been said with truth that if a stranger, from some heathen country, were to visit one of our churches on a Communion Sunday, he "would be likely to conclude that Christianity is not *one* religion but two; designed for two different classes of persons, communicants and non-communicants; both servants, indeed, of the same Master, but having by His authority different kinds of religious observances allotted to them respectively."\*

For when we reach that point in the Communion Service where there is a pause for the withdrawal of those who do not "mind to come to the Holy Communion," and for the "convenient placing of the Communicants,"

\* Archbishop Whately On the Sacraments, p. 72.

would not the stranger witness such a difference proclaimed in the dividing of the same Christian congregation?

One might explain to him, however, that the religion—the Christian faith professed—the obligations owned, were all the same; and that the difference which he observed was one established only by the worshippers themselves; that some are now about to keep a commandment which their Master intended should be kept by all His servants; but that the others, who are quite aware of this, are, for various reasons, and upon different excuses, about to disobey it.

He might feel wonder at all this, and wonder the more as he looked round and saw that no one else appeared to be surprised at it. We are, in fact, too used to it to wonder any more.

Yet Paul and the Apostles—all those who loved Christ long ago, and loved to keep within their hearts their Master's saying, "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you"—would be surprised indeed by seeing this general disregard of a command which they so cherished.

On the Lord's day his people meet together in His house—join in the same worship—listen to the same word of life—and with their ears hear alike "the Spirit and the Bride say, Come;" and then divide themselves into two companies—set upon themselves a mark of separation—as if they wished to manifest who really do desire to remember and serve Christ, and who do not.



It is in truth a lamentable thing—discouraging to the Minister—how far more grievous to Him who with “exceeding great love” calls all to be His guests—to see the “company of faithful people” reduced to such a very, *very* few. It forces upon one this awful question, “If the great judgment were this same hour to begin, are these the numbers we should see on either side?” And yet what reason have we to suppose that God’s decision would be a different one from that which some—those who depart—are here *pronouncing on themselves*?

Prayers, vows, thanksgivings, confessions have been made—or seemed to be made—so far, in common; and then, of Christ’s avowed disciples much the larger number “go away;” so soon—after such a service—by their own act, distinguishing themselves from those who have made those same professions in good earnest, with steadfast purpose to submit their hearts and lives to Christ’s holy will and pleasure; “studying to serve Him in true holiness;” and therefore anxious to have every help that may advance and cheer them in their service.

Most men will treasure, and make a scruple of obeying, the last wishes of a dying friend; and all who leave the church know, just as well as those who stay, that Jesus said on his last night, “Do this in remembrance of Me.” And yet they will not do it. There is *One Friend* whose last request they will not keep. All things are now ready; “there lacketh nothing but the guests;” once more the Lord’s invitation reaches them, “DO THIS;” yet they refuse; “and every echo of their parting foot-

steps down the aisle, as they turn their backs upon the table to go out, seems to answer, 'I will *not* do it.'''\*

Now, I know well that if a man be living a life of sin, or of determined indifference about religion, he is not likely to recognise the duty of keeping this commandment; he must begin (to put the matter at the very lowest) by feeling something of an obligation to serve God—some sense of duty and of a higher law than his own will—some consciousness of sin—some fear of self—some want of help—some need of a Saviour. To these, or to some one of these—for any of them may be the beginning—he must awake, before he will be brought to the Lord's table. We must not say that *all* are to approach, whatever be their lives and purposes, whether "*religiously disposed*" or not. We cannot lower the holiness of this Sacrament to suit unholy hearts and lives; for then we should be building up the observance of a Christian rite upon the ruins of Christianity itself.

Yet I fully believe that of those who absent themselves, there are many who ought to come; many who are really amongst those invited by Christ and by His

\* The words marked as a quotation are from a little book called *Come to the Supper, or Plain Reading on the Sacrament*, by E. Bickersteth. As regards simplicity and *heartiness*, it is one of the best that I have met with; but it is certainly defective in not sufficiently recognising the Holy Communion as a means of grace. The latter part of the title should be altered to "*the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*;" for the expression, "*The Sacrament*," leads people practically to forget that there are *two*.

Church—who yet, for various reasons, are not habitual communicants. Into those different reasons I cannot enter here; except so far as such excuses may be removed by explanations of the Prayer-Book services, that being properly my subject now.

First, then, there are some words to be considered in the opening Exhortation; where the Presbyter,\* having first spoken of the benefits imparted to “those who with a true penitent heart and lively faith receive that holy Sacrament,” goes on to say, “so is the danger great if we receive the same unworthily; for then we are guilty of the body and blood of Christ; we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord’s body; we kindle God’s wrath against us; we provoke Him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death. Judge, therefore, yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord.”

Some persons are prevented by these words from coming to the Table of the Lord; or, at least, give them as a reason why they shrink from doing so. But we must try to ascertain the meaning of the passage in the Prayer-Book, by referring to that part of the Bible from which it has been taken; and we shall find, upon a closer

\* “Let them use what dialect they will; whether we call it a Priesthood, a Presbytery, or a Ministry, it skilleth not. Although in truth the word *Presbyter* doth seem more fit and in propriety of speech more agreeable than *Priest* with the drift of the whole gospel of Jesus Christ. . . . The Holy Ghost throughout the body of the New Testament making so much mention of them, doth not anywhere call them *Priests*.”—Hooker, Ecc. Pol., Book v. ch. lxxviii. 3. The Scotch Liturgy, throughout, has ‘Presbyter’ instead of ‘Priest.’ See Lecture II.

view, that the warnings here quoted are sometimes thought to have a sense and application quite different from what were really meant by the Apostle.

For, first, let us examine what is the "*unworthiness*" that St. Paul here speaks of, and explains as "not discerning the Lord's body."

Secondly, what is the meaning of the term here used, "*damnation*."

Thirdly, in what respects, and how far only, we can apply to ourselves words that were spoken under far different circumstances from our own.

If you go through the passage in Corinthians in detail, it will—in the first instance—appear quite plain, even to the least educated reader, that the form of celebrating the Lord's Supper, here alluded to, must have been very different from that with which we are familiar. The 21st verse, for example, which speaks of "*every one taking before another his own supper*," of "*one being hungry*, and another *drunken*," is a sufficient proof of this.

And in fact the feasts to which St. Paul refers were rather the *occasions* on which the Holy Communion was celebrated than the Sacrament itself.

It was the practice of the early Church to unite together in a social meal, in token of their mutual love, and in memory of our Lord's last passover feast with His disciples. These meetings were called "*Agapæ*," or love-feasts. The custom on these occasions was for each to bring his own contribution toward the meal; and towards the conclusion of it, for all to celebrate—by eating of one loaf, and drinking of one cup—what was peculiarly and properly the sacramental rite.

But it may be easily supposed that some irregularities and unseemly confusion would arise from this custom; and in fact those disorders did arise, and, after the Apostles' days, we find that they led eventually to the abolition of these "love-feasts" altogether. Indeed, from St. Paul's concluding words, "The rest will I set in order when I come," it is most probable that, when he did revisit the Corinthians, he introduced some changes himself in the administration of this ordinance. Meanwhile, he censures some of the most glaring abuses which had reached his ears: "In this I praise you not" (he says), "that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse; for when ye come together, this is not to eat the *Lord's* Supper;"—that is to say—"you seem entirely to forget the object of your meeting, which should be, not *your own* mutual entertainment, but to eat the Supper of the *Lord*;"—"For in eating every one taketh before other *his own* supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken."

It was intended that each of those who came should bring a contribution, according to his means, toward the general feast; but that all should partake of it alike, without distinction.

As it happened, however, that the rich brought most, their poorer brethren less, and the very poor nothing at all, invidious distinctions began soon to be made;—so much so, that while they who were unable to contribute remained hungry, some of the more abundantly supplied ate and drank to excess. This abuse the Apostle reproves as not only selfish, but indecent and profane. "What!

have ye not houses to eat and drink in?—or despise ye the Church of God, and put to shame them that have not,” i. e. your poorer brethren, who *have nothing to contribute* ?\*

Once more then he reminds them of the words and acts of Jesus on that last night—“ the same in which He was betrayed”—when He ordained those holy mysteries. He calls upon them to remember the solemn meaning of this rite—kept “ in remembrance of their Saviour,”—“ *As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord’s death until He come.*” ‘ The broken bread, the wine poured out,’ were the appointed emblems of Christ’s body and blood; and the Corinthians had received them with irreverence, and had made that holy ordinance a scene of rude disorder and profaneness.

But so to desecrate the signs was to dishonour the thing signified—“ Wherefore,”—he warns them—“ whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord *unworthily*, shall be guilty of the body and blood of Christ”—language strong, indeed, but meaning this: that the conduct of those who could commemorate with such profane indifference Christ’s death—nay, who could turn that commemoration into an occasion of levity and riot, was nearly akin to theirs who had put Him to death, or had looked on with apathy while He was crucified—was virtually to be sharers in the sin of those who crucified the Lord, and put Him to an open shame; “ *not*

\* Or, “ *who have not houses to eat and drink in*, and therefore come to the daily Agapæ to be fed.”—[Alford].

*knowing what they did.*” “But let a man examine himself”—let him bethink himself seriously what he is about to do,—“and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh *unworthily*”—i. e. so *unbecomingly*—in so indifferent a spirit, and in so profane a way—“eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.”

The meaning of these latter words it is not hard to see; the bread and wine, although unchanged in substance, were consecrated to an holy meaning; set apart to represent the body and the blood of Christ. They were the chosen memorials of Christ’s death—the appropriated pledges of His dying love. Could those, then, worthily, *becomingly*, receive them, who partook of them just with the same indifference as they would bring to any ordinary meal?

Yet this was the irreverent usage into which many of the Corinthians had fallen; and against this the Apostle warns them—“he that eateth and drinketh so unworthily—not distinguishing the Lord’s body”—putting no difference between these holy symbols and mere ordinary bread and wine—eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.

You see, then, the first point,—what the Apostle meant by the “unworthy partaking” which he censures.

Secondly, we have to notice what he speaks of as the consequences of this—“eateth and drinketh to himself **DAMNATION.**” By this word we usually understand *eternal* punishment—the judgment of lost spirits. But this is *not* the meaning which the translators of our Bible

intended to convey, nor is it the meaning of the original. That signifies (as the margin of our Bibles gives it) "*judgment*;" and it is the very same word which in the 34th verse is rendered "condemnation." In 1 Tim. v. 12, it evidently stands for "condemnation;" and in Romans, xiv. 23, we have it also; "Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation;" i. e. that condemnation which it is the ruler's office to inflict.\*

The Apostle is referring, then, to the *temporal chastisements* which were inflicted on individuals in the Corinthian Church. And with regard to these he tells them plainly—as an inspired Apostle had a right to do—that the visitations under which some of them suffered were sent upon them "for this cause" by God, and were a marked token of His disapproval.

These chastisements seem of the nature of special miraculous inflictions, serving—as did the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira—to vindicate the truth that Christ was with His Church, animating, sanctifying, protecting it; to warn men, at the outset, of the danger of presuming against, or lightly regarding, the presence of that Holy Spirit whose indwelling constitutes the Church the

\* Again, in Romans, xiv. 23, "And he that doubteth is *damned* if he eat," the meaning being, "He that *putteth a distinction* [between meats] is *condemned* if he eat [i. e., stands *self-condemned*], because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin," i. e. whatever is not done with full conviction of its being right is, to the doer of it, sin.



"Temple of the living God;" and makes the ordinances of it holy. Whether like visitations be, in such cases, sent now or not, we cannot venture to affirm positively, or to deny; but, plainly, no one has the right to pronounce in any case—and to interpret God's providential dealings, as St. Paul does—for this entirely sufficient reason, that no one is commissioned, as he was, to speak with an infallible authority upon these matters. But in the case of the Corinthians, the cause and the design of these visitations are both authoritatively declared: "For *this* cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" [i. e. die]. "For if we would judge\* ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should *not* be condemned with the world."

Why, then, were these judgments inflicted, does he say? As a *chastening* from the Lord—in mercy—that they should *not* be condemned, i. e. finally condemned. They were sent, therefore, you see, to *save* them from *damnation* in the world to come. But they were a proof that God saw something in them to condemn—something which he wished them to correct. The Apostle warns them, therefore, to amend their faulty conduct on this point—"Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger,

\* Rather, "if we *had judged* ourselves, we should not *have been judged*;" no such punishments would have befallen us. [Alford.] The verb here rendered "*judge*" corresponds with the noun which is translated, in verse 29, "*damnation*;" or, as in the margin, "*judgment*."

let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto condemnation."

And now let us consider, in the third place, how far we should apply these words of the Apostle to ourselves. Recollect, then, the unworthiness which St. Paul blames was nothing less than a total and profane disregard as to the sacred character of this commemorative feast. Now, open irreverence, disorders and indecency—such as the Apostle censures—would be in the present state of things far from likely to occur in any Christian congregation. The very circumstances of the case forbid it—make it, in fact, impossible. For only consider the mode in which that holy ordinance is celebrated now—the way in which it is administered in our own scriptural and well-ordered Church.

Think of the grave and decent ceremonial which accompanies it; the earnest preparatory exhortation; the united prayers breathing a sense of sin, of unworthiness, and need; the sympathy with fellow-worshippers around us; the quiet, solemnizing tone of the whole service; the very silence of the Church—the words that, while they break upon that silence, seem scarcely to disturb its stillness. Think of these circumstances, and say whether it is even *possible* that Christians now could, literally speaking, do as the Corinthians—that any now could so forget—as the Corinthians did—for what they "come together."

That some partake of the Lord's Supper with little real reverence of heart, I know too well; and if any do so come, without a thought as to the meaning of this rite;

if any come, not "devoutly and religiously disposed," but in a spirit of indifference—for the sake of worldly appearances—for fashion's or for superstition's sake—it is most true that *they* repeat, in some degree, the fault of the Corinthians; they eat and drink unworthily; and to their condemnation, rather than their benefit.

But there are others who over-hastily apply Paul's censure to themselves; who would come to the Lord's Supper, but for the awe they feel at this warning against "eating of that bread and drinking of that cup unworthily."

Now, let me say to such persons this—Assuming that you do really feel these scruples, and do not use them only as an excuse, I will just ask you a question. Suppose you were to accept Christ's invitation, and come *to-day*, or on the next occasion, do you think that you would come with an indifferent and irreverent spirit? Whenever you *have* come, was it in such a spirit that you came? Do you not think that, if you had witnessed irreverence in others, it would have shocked and wounded you to see it? If it be so, it cannot be that you yourself forget or disregard the sacred meaning of the ordinance. But if not, then you would not, in coming to it, be receiving *unworthily* in that particular sense which the Apostle means—for which he is condemning the Corinthians.

*They* totally forgot the solemn character of this rite; but *you*, on the contrary, remember it. Nay, is it not for that very reason that you fear to come? For why is it that you shrink from drawing near, but that you feel

how deeply solemn—how sacred—an ordinance it is? Your very awe, then,—though it partake even of a superstitious character—shows that you are *not* at least *irreverent*—that you do “discern” in these external emblems “the Lord’s body”—that you would *not* therefore—in St. Paul’s meaning of the word—be partaking “*unworthily*.”

There is indeed a sense in which you *are* unworthy; but if the Apostle had meant *this* unworthiness to hinder you from coming, then he would have excluded not you only, but all men alike. You say, perhaps, “I am not fit—not good enough to come.” But if you are sincere in saying so, this is just the same confession as all of us, alike, are called upon to make, in the words of the Communion Prayer, “We do not presume to come to this thy table, O Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies; we are *not worthy* so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table.” And again, after the Communion, “And though we be *unworthy* through our manifold sins to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, *not weighing our merits*, but pardoning our offences through Christ Jesus our Lord.” If you know that you can with truth speak thus of yourself as sinful and unworthy, why separate yourself from communion with those whose only hope and plea is the same mercy? If you, like them, can speak of the sore burden of your sins, why for that reason shrink from Him who speaks those “comfortable words” to all that truly turn to Him, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.”

“ Do we think ourselves unfit and unworthy to appear in God’s presence ? But is any man unworthy to obey God’s commands ? Is any man unfit to implore and partake God’s mercy, if he be not unwilling to do it ? What unworthiness should hinder us from remembering our Lord’s excessive charity towards us, and thanking Him for it ? from praying for His grace ? from resolving to amend our lives ? Must we, because we are unworthy, continue so still, by shunning the means of correcting and curing us ?

“ Must we *increase* our unworthiness by transgressing our duty ?

“ There is no man, indeed, who must not confess himself unworthy ; therefore must no man come thither at God’s call ?

“ If we have a sense of our sins, and a mind to leave them ; if we have a sense of God’s goodness, and a heart to thank Him for it, we are so worthy that we shall be kindly received there and graciously rewarded.”\*

If, indeed, you are resolved to *keep* the sins from which Christ died to save you, if there be any evil in your heart from which you do not wish to be set free, then, *thus* “unworthily” receiving, you would indeed be “guilty of the body and blood of Christ.”

And yet, remember that so long as you reject Christ from your heart, this very guilt—the guilt of disregarding His great salvation—lies upon you, whether you come or not.

But, indeed, the only worthiness He asks is, that we

\* Isaac Barrow.

should feel ourselves to be unworthy ; that we should know our need, and trust His love and power to supply it. If, then, you feel that you are weak and sinful, and yet are conscious of one faint or struggling wish to become better, you need not fear to listen to His gracious call, "Come unto me."

Were He on earth, were He to stand amongst us now visibly, would you draw near to Him for mercy, sure that the Saviour would not, *could* not turn from the sinner whom He died to save—sure that the Saviour's eye would never frown one earnest suppliant away? Or would you take into your lips the wild rash prayer, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord?"

Yet, after all, the life of some is but the expression of this prayer: "I cannot bear to come into the near and solemn presence of the Saviour; when I am better fitted, I may dare to do so; but how shall I receive a blessing from Him now, unworthy, cold-hearted as I am? 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' " You would not that the Lord should hear that prayer? No! for you do not mean to fling away your hope of heaven. Then why should you neglect those means of grace, through which you may draw near to Him—so near, if you but come in faith, as to be made "one with Him and He with you"—to "dwell in Him and He in you?" Whatever brings Christ nearer to you, brings nearer security, and strength, and life, and righteousness, and peace; and this is what we are to seek "through faith," as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup—"showing forth the Lord's death till He come."

Do not, then, fear or shrink away ; or rather, fear only if you *do* shrink away from Him. Remember who He is that bids us come—

"It is my Maker—dare I stay?

My Saviour—dare I turn away?"

I have endeavoured now to remove the most important difficulties which are in any degree connected with misapprehensions of the Communion Office itself ; but, before closing, I must notice one other expression in the service that has been somewhat misapplied. It has been used superstitiously by some, so as perhaps to cherish in others an indistinct kind of *terror*, that tends to keep them away from the Lord's Table. I mean the word "MYSTERY." Our colloquial use of it, and of the adjective "mysterious," suggests the idea of something very dark, unintelligibly secret, and obscure. Now, it is true that in all spiritual matters—in all things relating to the way in which God's Spirit acts on our spirits—the mode in which Christ's life quickens and dwells in us—there is much that we do not understand. There are blessings and benefits that our reason cannot explain ; which, though beyond the reach of our intellects fully to measure, are not, thank God, beyond the capacity of our spirits to receive. For none can fathom the full deep meaning of those words, "*Christ liveth in me ;*" yet many besides Paul know that they are true ; and that because of this indwelling living presence, they live. I do not mean, then, that we should try to bring down everything connected with religion to the level of human understanding. They must be singularly wise—or, believing themselves so, sin-

gularly foolish—who either require or attempt this. Till we have cleared away all “*mystery*,” (in this its common sense) from the world that we live in—from ourselves—from our own moral and intellectual being—from the connexion and mutual influence of soul and body, &c.—we need not grow impatient if “*mystery*” should still attach itself to our connexion with the unseen world, and our relations towards an unseen, omnipresent God, “in whom we live, and move, and have our being.” But, however this may be true, and even important to observe, it is equally true that the word “*mystery*” is employed in the Communion Service in a sense different from this its ordinary use; and in a sense nearer to the original idea which was implied in the expression; that is to say, it means, a sacred sign—a symbol—or emblem.\*

It denotes, in short, in the Communion Service, the *elements* themselves—the bread and wine—which are the sacred emblems in this feast. Thus in the Exhortation it is said, “He hath instituted and ordained holy *mysteries* as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death.” The “outward” part, which

\* In the *religious celebrations* of the Greeks, called “*mysteries*,” certain emblems were used (as at this day among the Freemasons), and the instruction of those who were *initiated* consisted in having these symbols or representations explained to them. Hence the term came also to signify the sign itself, or emblem, in which a moral or religious meaning was contained.

Upon this point, and on the Greek word “*Mystery*,” and Latin “*Sacrament*,” as used interchangeably, and with a similar latitude, see Note E, appended to this Lecture.



Christ ordained as a *sign* of an inward spiritual grace given unto us ; as a means whereby we receive that grace, and a pledge to assure us thereof"—“the outward and visible sign [mystery or Sacrament], in the Lord’s Supper,” our Catechism expressly states to be “*bread and wine* which the Lord hath commanded to be received.” In the same Exhortation it is said, “So shall ye be meet partakers of those holy mysteries ;” all are about to be partakers of them, but not all *meet* partakers ; all, of the *outward signs*—none but the believing, the repentant, and the loving, of the “*inward grace*.”

Again, in one of the prayers after Communion we say, “We thank Thee, that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood,” &c. What all alike have “*received*” are the holy *mysteries*, i. e. the bread and wine ; what God has fed the faithful soul with is the “*spiritual food*,” &c. And this agrees precisely with the prayer of Consecration, “Grant that we *receiving*”—receiving what?—“*these thy creatures of bread and wine*, according to Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ’s holy institution . . . *may be* partakers of His most blessed body and blood.”

Receiving, then, these “holy mysteries,” we do not merely signify thereby that we believe Jesus to have given His body to be slain for us, and to have poured out His life for us ; but when we “feed on Him in our hearts, through *faith*, with thanksgiving,” this Holy Communion becomes to us a “means of grace,” for the “strengthening and refreshing of our souls ;” and God “assures us

thereby of His favour and goodness towards us;" and "Christ dwelleth in us, and we with Him; He is made one with us, and we with Him." Of this, however, I shall speak more fully in the next Lecture.

Only bear this in mind, as to this Holy Sacrament, that it is not to be regarded as a charm that acts upon us of itself, or as intended to affect us for the moment only. Its true purpose is "to strengthen and quicken our faith." And that faith must afterwards more animate our prayers, more purify our hearts, more influence our lives; and then only shall this Holy Sacrament have answered its appointed end, of uniting us into a closer communion with the Saviour Himself.

Do not postpone this duty to a dying bed. Our Lord designed the ordinance to be what many have found it, a means of *grace* for the *living*—not, as some superstitiously mistake, a means of procuring *pardon* for the *dying*. Try, then, if you have not tried before, the faithfulness and truth of His own promise. Do this in remembrance of Him; and He, no doubt, as once He did to His disciples, will "make Himself known to you in breaking of bread."

If you would learn more and more to trust your Saviour, your best way is to try Him. "O taste and see that the Lord is gracious."

Here is a pledge that Christ remembers and loves us, as sure a pledge as we can have. For it is only they that love who would live always present in the memory of those that are loved. It is because Christ loves us that He has asked to be remembered by us. No one would

think of saying to a friend, "Remember me when I am gone," but that he himself, too, means to remember that friend. And so, if Christ has asked us to do this in memory of Him, we may feel sure that *He* remembers *us*.

Therefore, the very fact that this is a memorial feast involves the truth that is more besides; for *Christ's remembering us* implies a love in present life and exercise, a present blessing given upon His part. Prove, then, that love; and make that blessing yours. Through—yet beyond—the outward sign, look to the thing signified—the benefits of His most precious death, and of His spiritual life—and aim to have the very fulness of those benefits your own. For "it is not the mere outward memorials; no, nor even the inward memory of Christ that can save us, but the very presence of Christ Himself, 'dwelling in our hearts by faith.'"<sup>\*</sup> This is the earnest of our inheritance. CHRIST LIVING IN US is the "hope of glory."

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#### NOTE E.

##### ON THE WORDS MYSTERY AND SACRAMENT.

"MYSTERY, a <sup>revealed</sup> secret. *The mysteries* were certain religious celebrations. These were always *secret*; but all Greeks, without distinction of rank or education, nay, even slaves, and in later times, foreigners, might be initiated. Probably they were *shows* or *scenic representations* of mythical legends, not unlike the religious 'mysteries'

<sup>\*</sup> Dr. Arnold.

of the middle ages."\* Thus we see how naturally in classic Greek the word came, from denoting a "revealed secret," to bear the sense of an outward symbol, or "representation."

And a similar transition may be traced in the New Testament use of the word. Mystery here also means (1st) a "*revealed secret*,"—a secret made manifest; thus, e. g., Romans, xvi. 25, "The revelation of the *mystery* which *was kept secret* since the world began; but *now is made manifest*;" Eph. i. 9, "By revelation he hath *made known* to me the mystery;" Eph. iii. 3, "The mystery which in other ages was not made known *as it is now revealed*;" and in 1 Cor. xv. 51, "Behold I show [tell—reveal to] you a mystery."

Our Lord says to His disciples,† "It is given unto you to know the *mysteries* [hidden truths] of the kingdom of heaven;" but [Mark, iv. 11] "unto them that are without all these things are done in *parables*;"‡ "that it might be fulfilled [says St. Matthew] which was spoken by the prophets, saying, "I will open my mouth in *parables*; I will utter *things which have been kept secret* from the foundation of the world" [i. e., the "*mysteries of the kingdom*."]

These truths, or *mysteries*, were conveyed in the form of "*parables*," or figurative representations; and hence the term "*mystery*," originally signifying the *doctrine revealed*, came (by a transition like the above) to stand (2ndly) for the symbolic representation [the parable

\* Scott and Liddell's Greek Lexicon [*μυστήριον*]. The "*mysteries*" of the middle ages, above referred to, were certain rude "representations" of Scripture facts and incidents, much like those that the "Redemptorist Fathers" have been of late years exhibiting to the ignorant country people in many parts of Ireland.

† Matthew, xiii. 22.

‡ "That seeing they may see, and not perceive," &c., i. e. that having eyes to see, and yet not using them, they may be punished by the loss of spiritual vision—left to their own self-chosen blindness; that having ears to hear, and yet not hearing, they may be left without understanding. The use of parables served as a *test* of character; drawing out the difference between those who were "of the truth" and those who were not; showing who cared to learn of Christ, and who did not. Our Lord explained them to *all that asked an explanation*, laying down this as His own rule, "*To him that hath shall be given*," &c., Matt. xiii.; Mark, iv. 22-25.

—or figure] under which it was conveyed. In this sense it is used by St. Paul,\* speaking of marriage, "This is a great mystery,"—a great and deeply significant emblem†—"but I mean concerning Christ and the Church;" I mean, i. e., that it is so "great and excellent a mystery;" because (as our marriage service expresses it) *in it is signified and represented* the spiritual marriage and unity that is betwixt Christ and His Church." Marriage, then (according to this statement), is a MYSTERY, as being a *sign or representation*.

The same sense "EMBLEM," we have also in Rev. i. 20, "The mystery of the seven stars;" in Rev. xvii. 5, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT;" and v. 7, "I will tell thee the mystery [i. e. explain to thee the emblem] of the woman."‡

SACRAMENT.

The word "sacrament" originally meant§ *anything sacred*, and hence a sacred pledge or sign; and it is used in this *wide* sense by many of the older writers. Thus, for example (as Barrow notices in his Doctrine of the Sacraments), St. Augustine speaks of the *sacrament*, or occult emblematic meaning, of the rock; the *sacrament* of certain [mystic] numbers; the sacrament of bread, of fish: and of the "water" and "blood" that flowed from our Saviour's side, as sacraments or *types* of the two sacraments themselves. "In short" (as Barrow ob-

\* Eph. v. 32.

† Or rather, "This emblem is great—is an important one, but," &c. See Lecture on Marriage Service.

‡ Μυστήριον . . . . etiam *emblema*, i. q. τυπος, σύμβολον.—Schleusner, Lex. Nov. Test.

§ It also signified the solemn *oath* by which the Roman soldiers bound themselves to serve; and in this sense it has been very suitably applied to those two ordinances in which we make and renew our pledges, as "good soldiers of Christ Jesus." But this was a secondary sense. "The commoner use of the word is either for a sacred rite in general, an *outward sign* of some more hidden reality; or else for certain particular, more exalted rites of the Gospel and the Church. It has in short a more extended and a more restricted sense. In its more extended sense, it signified little more than a religious ordinance or sacred sign."—See Browne on the Articles, Art. xxv.

serve), "he says of all signs, that, when they belong to *divine things*, they are called *Sacraments*."

"St. Cyprian calls the three hours of prayer 'a sacrament [symbol] of the Trinity;' he says the manna was a sacrament of the equality with which Christ diffuses His gifts of light and grace upon His Church; and that the Red Sea was a sacrament (i. e. a divinely ordained figure or type) of baptism. In short (as the writer just quoted\* shows by abundant proofs), the word *mystery*, among the Greeks, and the corresponding word *sacrament*, among the Latins, were used for "any sacred sign." But they apply the terms in a higher and more special sense to the two Gospel ordinances which our Lord appointed, i. e. to Baptism and the Eucharist. And *in order to mark this difference*, our English Reformers, together with all the reformed Churches, limited the term 'sacrament' to *these two*."†

Thus, in the Homily "On Common Prayer and Sacraments," they say, "As for the number of them, if they should be considered according to the exact signification of a SACRAMENT, namely, for THE VISIBLE SIGNS, expressly commanded in the New Testament, whereunto is annexed the promise of free forgiveness of our sin, and of our holiness and joining in Christ, there be *but two*, namely, BAPTISM and the SUPPER OF THE LORD." And further on, after speaking of "certain other rites," such as Ordination, Matrimony, Confirmation, &c, they say, "Yet no man ought to take these for sacraments; in such signification and meaning as the sacrament of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper are," &c.

For clearness, therefore, and for safety's sake, they judged it better to restrict the term; not calling *every sacred sign* a Sacrament, but limiting that word according to the definition in the Catechism.

\* Browne, Art. xxv.

† At first they did not take this precaution; for in the First Book of Homilies the expression "Sacrament of Matrimony" occurs in the very next line after the words, "Sacrament of Baptism."—Hom. against Swearing, part I. But their language became more precise, as the necessity for this precision became more evident. This may be seen from the passage quoted above (from Second Book of Homilies), and from the definition of a "Sacrament" in the Church Catechism.

"What meanest thou by this word Sacrament? I mean, an OUTWARD VISIBLE SIGN [not, however, *every* outward sign of a spiritual meaning, but] of (1) an inward and spiritual *grace given* unto us; (2) *ordained by Christ* Himself; as (3) a *means* whereby we receive the same [the inward grace]; and (4) a *pledge* to assure us thereof." All the types of the Old Testament were sacraments in the more general sense; i. e. they were symbols of a religious meaning; in fact, the whole Mosaic system was typical or sacramental. And in the same wide sense we might speak of everything that can be called a religious emblem as a "Sacrament." *But since our Church has defined the sense in which the word Sacrament has been employed in her own formularies; and in that sense has absolutely limited the term to BAPTISM AND THE EUCHARIST; it is, to say the least, a confusion of language, to give this characteristic name to other ordinances. To speak, therefore (as some have done), of Matrimony, Orders, Confirmation, &c. as "Sacraments;" or of a "sacramental grace" in them, is certainly to depart from the prudent definition of the Church itself; and it is also to use language strongly savouring of tendency to Romish error on these points.*

There is some latitude, however, in the application of the word Sacrament, in connexion with the two special Christian rites.

Thus Cranmer, in his work on the Lord's Supper, says in the Preface :—

"First; this word 'Sacrament,' I do sometimes use (as it is many times taken among writers and holy doctors) for the Sacramental bread, water, or wine; as when they say, that '*Sacramentum est sacre rei signum*,' a Sacrament is the sign of an holy thing . . . . and sometimes by this word I mean the whole ministration and receiving of the Sacraments, either of Baptism or of the Lord's Supper; and so the old writers many times do say that Christ and the Holy Ghost be present in the Sacraments; not meaning by that manner of speech that Christ and the Holy Ghost be present in the water, bread or wine (*which be only the outward visible Sacraments*), but that in the due ministration of the Sacraments, according to Christ's ordinance and institution, Christ and His Holy Spirit be truly and indeed present by

their mighty and sanctifying power, virtue, and grace, in all them that worthily receive the same.\*

In Article xxv., the word is used in the same twofold application, in reference, FIRST, and properly, to the OUTWARD SIGNS; as where it is said, "The Sacraments were not ordained to be *gazed* upon; or to be carried about." Art. xxviii., where it is said, "Transubstantiation overthroweth the nature of a *Sacrament* [which consists in being an outward *sign* of something different from itself]. And "the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance *reserved* carried about, lifted up,\* or worshipped." Again, Art. xxix. speaks of the wicked as "pressing with their teeth the *sacrament*," &c. (i. e. of course, the sacred elements); "yet are they no wise partakers of Christ; but rather to their condemnation do eat and drink the SIGN or SACRAMENT of so great a thing."

SECONDLY, Our Articles apply the word—as Cranmer does—more comprehensively, to THE SACRED ORDINANCE GENERALLY; as, for example, in Art. xxv., "There are two sacraments ordained of Christ i. e., Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord." And other instances are to be found of the same use.

In the Communion Service itself we find the term employed in these two senses:—1st., for the "*outward signs*," in the same meaning as *mystery*, explained above. Thus, in the First Exhortation, "that holy SACRAMENT, which being so divine and comfortable a thing to those who receive it worthily; and so dangerous to them that will presume to receive unworthily; \* and in the next sentence, "consider

\* Cranmer's Works. On the Lord's Supper, p. 3, Parker Soc. Ed. He adds, "All this I understand of His *Spiritual* presence, of the which he saith, 'I will be with you until the world's end;' and, 'Whosoever two or three are gathered together there am I,' &c.; and, 'He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him.'"

† As the Church of Rome orders her priests to elevate the *host*, i. e. the "*hostia*" or "victim," which they believe is there exhibited under the appearance of a wafer.

\* Only the elements themselves *can* be received unworthily; for the "thing signified" is not received at all by the unworthy—Christ being there a "*spiritual* food and sustenance;" and "the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten being *faith*."—Art. xxviii. Therefore "Sacrament" and "mystery" above must mean the consecrated bread and wine.



the dignity of that holy MYSTERY, and the great peril of unworthy receiving thereof," &c. Also in the following sentences of the service:—"After the taking of that holy sacrament" [1st Exh.]; "Receive that holy sacrament" [2nd. Exhort.]; "Take this holy sacrament" [Address].

And it seems also used in the Prayer for the Church Militant in the 2nd, more comprehensive, sense in which we popularly speak of it—THE WHOLE SACRED RITE, including all that is connected with it.



## LECTURE VIII.

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### THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE HOLY COMMUNION.

#### THE INVITATION—TO THE END.

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1 COR. xi. 26.

*“ For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till He come.”*

I PURPOSE in this Lecture to review the remaining portion of the Communion Service; and to conclude the subject by directing your attention to some important points connected with it.

After the Exhortation, those that desire to receive—all that come with true repentance, love, faith, and earnest Christian purpose—are invited to “draw near, and take this holy sacrament to their comfort.” Before they do so, they are called on to make their humble confession to Almighty God, “meekly kneeling upon their knees.”\*

\* These latter words evidently suppose that the people have not been kneeling during the Exhortation and the Invitation to approach; and nothing but thoughtlessness would lead people to remain in the attitude of prayer while only listening to an address.

The ABSOLUTION that is pronounced after the confession is of the nature of a *prayer* rather than a declaration;\* a prayer, however, made "in full assurance of faith," for it is framed on the sure promises of God. The "comfortable words" which follow it are added to convey the strongest encouragement a penitent can have; in these it is the voice of God Himself that speaks; sealing the prayer of His ministers as granted; assuring us on His own word that we are truly partakers of His declared forgiveness; emboldening us to accept, as from Himself directly, the absolution which He pronounces upon "all that truly turn to Him."

At this point, there is, most naturally, a transition in the service. "Lift up your hearts!" the Minister exclaims;† the people answering, as if all animated by those divine encouragements just heard, "We lift them up unto the Lord," &c. Then the believing members of Christ's Church on earth ascend, by faith, to where He sitteth at the right hand of God; and join the song of "angels and archangels;" lauding and magnifying God's holy name, and crying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of

\* The latter part of the Absolution is taken from the old Sarum Breviary; the opening of it, as well as the "Confession," and the "comfortable words," are in the Cologne Liturgy, which was drawn up by Melancthon and Bucer, on the model of a service arranged by Luther.

† In the old Liturgies, "*Sursum Corda*;" literally, UP, HEARTS! The "Angelic Song" (Tersanctus) is an old Eastern Hymn; author unknown. Observe that of the FIVE Festivals for which proper pre-faces are appointed, ASCENSION-DAY is one. The importance which our Reformers justly and scripturally attached to this Commemoration is ably pointed out by the Rev. Dr. Salmon in a volume of Sermons published by Macmillan and Co.

hosts; heaven and earth are full of thy glory; Glory be to Thee, O Lord Most High.”\*

After this comes the prayer offered “in the name of all them that shall receive the Communion.” Of this I have already spoken, and shall refer to part of it again.

And then the “Prayer of Consecration.” In this it is as if the minister were partly speaking to Almighty God, and partly to the people; for he (1) refers to the meaning and object of the rite; then (2) he offers a petition; and (3) repeats the words of Institution.

Observe, in this prayer, how earnestly our Church asserts and *reiterates* the doctrine of the sacrificial, expiatory character of our Saviour’s death, “who made (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.”

In this short sentence three grave and dangerous errors are disclaimed.

1. The Romanists pretend that the sacrifice of Christ is repeated in the *Mass*. But Scripture tells us “that He offered *ONE* sacrifice for sins for ever;” and so the prayer says, “by His *one* oblation once offered . . . *full, perfect, and sufficient.*”

2. Some in those days, as well as now, attempted to explain away the Atonement; and “to show forth the Lord’s death” as a “martyrdom;” or a “manifestation

\* Note that the opening part of this “Tersanctus” should be repeated by the Presbyter alone—being a sort of recitative—and a continuation of the Preface; the latter part—“Holy, Holy Holy,” &c., is the *chorus* to be taken up by the people.

of love," only ; but Scripture says, " Christ our Passover was *sacrificed for us* ;" that " He is the *propitiation* for our sins ;" and that " by one *offering* He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified ;" and so the Church—exhausting every term, as if it would not have any ambiguity upon the point—declares that He " made there, of Himself, once OFFERED . . . . a *sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction.*"

3. There are some, too, who do such wrong to the name and word of God—and to the exceeding great love of our Master and Saviour Jesus Christ—as to assert that He died not for all, but only to redeem some particular persons—to the exclusion of all others, beside these few. But Christ Himself has told us that " God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." The Holy Ghost declares by the Apostle John that Christ " is the propitiation, *not for our sins only*, but for the sins of the WHOLE WORLD." The Scripture repeats again and again the purpose of that redeeming love—" that He by the grace of God should taste death for *every man.*"\* And therefore we thank our " heavenly Father," who of His " tender mercy" gave His Son to be " a *full, perfect, and sufficient* sacrifice for the sins of the WHOLE WORLD."

And though the minister should venture, in the pulpit, to limit those promises of God which, in reading the General Confession, he affirms to be " *declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord,*" still by his mouth the Church proclaims the Gospel [the good news to man], over and

\* John, iii. 16, 17 ; 1 John, ii. 2 ; Heb. ii. 9.

over again. Thrice every Sunday in the Litany—in the most solemn form of all—in prayer to God,—the minister affirms his belief in Universal Redemption—"O God, the Son, Redeemer of the world; O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, *grant us thy peace*: O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, *have mercy upon us*." And thrice again in the Post-Communion Hymn of Thanksgiving [*Glory be to God, &c.*] Here, I think, as in the Litany, the 2nd invocation, "O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us," contains a somewhat different thought from the first. The 1st appeal seems made upon the fact of our redemption; the 2nd appeal seems made especially upon its universality.\*

The form of consecrating the elements is the simplest possible. There is before it a prayer that "we, receiving God's creatures of bread and wine, may be partakers of the body and the blood of Christ"—partakers, i. e. of a real union with Him in His death, and life, and glorified humanity.† But the consecration itself, strictly speaking, appears to consist in repeating our Saviour's *Words of Institution*.‡ As the Presbyter repeats them,

\* See parallel passage in Litany, referred to in Lecture VI.

† See this Lecture, further on.

‡ This is decided by the rubric after the administration, directing that the minister, in case he has to consecrate more bread and wine, should begin at "*Our Saviour Christ in the same night*," for the blessing of the bread," &c. The whole form, indeed, is of the character of a prayer; and these concluding words are therefore followed by the response, *Amen*. Wheatley, however, will have it that the consecra-

he takes the bread into his hand, and breaks it; he takes the cup also into his hand, as our Saviour did.

The laying of his hand upon the bread and the wine vessels is an act of designation.\* It is a natural expressive way of signifying that it is in relation to *that* bread and *that* wine—as distinguished from every other—that the words of consecration are used. And these are the only outward ceremonies which were retained by our Reformers in this service; while they rejected others that had marred its simplicity.†

It is directed that the minister shall “first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and then deliver the same to the bishops, priests, and deacons (if any be present), and after that to the people.” The reason of this was stated in the old Book of Common Prayer, “*that they may help the chief minister;*” or, as the Scotch Liturgy expresses it, “*that they may help him that celebrateth;*” But when the other clergy, who may be present in the church, are not required to officiate, there is no reason

tion must be made by a *direct* prayer, which he would regard as equivalent to the old form of *Invocation of the Holy Ghost upon the elements*. Accordingly he ventures to advise the minister, in such cases, to “repeat again the whole form, at least from the words, ‘*Hear us,*’” &c. But this is clearly to violate the rubric. The Scotch Liturgy (from which this rubric was taken) expressly calls the words of Institution, the “*words of consecration*.”

\* See Lecture XI., on Confirmation Service.

† Such, e. g. were the frequent crossings; the elevation and showing of the sacrament to the people; and the mixing of water with the wine. Bucer deserves more thanks than Wheatley is inclined to give him, for procuring these omissions.



for observing any order of precedence; nor is it customary in that case to observe it.\*

The form of words used in administering has varied at different times.† The earliest we find was a quota-

\* Notice the words directing the minister, in delivering the elements to the people, to give them "*into their hands.*" In some few churches it has been attempted to revive the Romish innovation of putting the bread into the people's mouths. The motive of this is very suspiciously like that of the Romish Church, a superstitious one. But it is worth remarking, that in the First Book of Edward that custom was retained for the very opposite reason, viz., to avoid superstition. The words are, "*forasmuch as they many times conveyed the same secretly away, kept it with them, and diversely abused it to superstition and wickedness, it was thought convenient the people should commonly receive the sacrament of Christ's body in their mouths at the priest's hand.*" [See Wheatley.] The custom was afterwards wisely done away by our Reformers, as being unnecessary, and likely to be itself superstitiously interpreted by many.

† For the first two centuries, or so, it does not appear that any words were spoken in giving the bread and wine to each individual. The Rev. W. Palmer observes:—"With regard to any words used at the delivery of the elements, we know not when they began to be used. Our Lord made use of expressions in the delivery of the Sacrament which the Apostles commemorated in their *thanksgiving* and *consecration*; but there is not the slightest reason to think that these expressions were ever in any way used at the *delivery* of the elements in the Primitive Church."—Palmer's *Antiquities of the English Ritual*, vol. ii. p. 153.

It cannot be denied that the custom of repeating the words once over for each "Table,"—or indeed for all the communicants—would agree most nearly with our Lord's original manner of institution; for He undoubtedly used the words,—"*Take, eat,*" &c., "*Drink ye all,*" &c.—to the Twelve generally, and in the plural form. And it appears also

tion from our Lord's own saying; "*The Body [or The Blood] of Christ;*" to which the communicant replied, "*Amen.*" At the beginning of the seventh century we find this changed to a prayer, "*The body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul.*" This was nearly the form adopted in the *First Communion Office* of Edward VI.; but at the second revision of the Prayer-Book in his reign (A. D. 1552), entirely new sentences were substituted, viz.: "*Take, and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.*" "*Drink this in remembrance,*" &c. Neither form contained anything objectionable; for both in fact are scriptural. But some preferred the one, and some the other; accordingly it was decided, at the revision of A. D. 1559, to have both forms combined. And so the sentences stand ever since, united, in our Prayer-Book.

The Office after communion consists of the Lord's Prayer, "a Thanksgiving-prayer," the ancient Hymn called "*Gloria in Excelsis,*"\* and the Blessing. We should

from the above that the distribution of the elements, in silence, to each individual, cannot be objected to, as being contrary to the primitive usage of the Christian Church. But it certainly is a departure from the order prescribed in our Prayer-Book, and very good reasons ought therefore to be shown for the adoption of the custom. Of course, with a conscientious minister, *necessity* alone—arising out of *particular circumstances*—could justify such a deviation from rule. But see Note E, appended to this Lecture.

\* This is called also the "*Angelic Hymn,*" from its first words, sung by the angels at our Saviour's birth [Luke, ii. 14]. It is of Eastern origin; but the author is not known. The whole service is of a *Eucharistic* [thanksgiving] character. But in this closing hymn of praise,

not object to a repetition of the Lord's Prayer, if we remembered how very comprehensive that brief form is, and how impossible, therefore, that all the meanings into which it is capable of being expanded should be present at any one time to the worshipper. This is the true explanation of its frequent recurrence in our offices. In every place it has a special meaning, and its petitions have a peculiar application. Here it is offered as the renewed self-dedication of those who have by union with Christ sought nearer access to the "Father."\* The first of the two forms of "Thanksgiving" contains two passages to be particularly noticed. You are aware that some have spoken of the Holy Communion as a literal "Sacrifice;" of the officiating presbyters as "sacrificing priests;" and of the Lord's Table as an "Altar." But this is to go back to Jewish forms and types; and to confound the Mosaic with the Christian system. The people of Israel had a material temple; complete in all its parts, and typical of a more glorious, *living*, Temple, even that "SPIRITUAL HOUSE" in which the Apostle says all Christians are "built up, as lively [living] stones."†

They had a mediatorial sacrificing priesthood; but

thanksgiving reaches its highest, most triumphant strain. "*We worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God,*" &c.

\* It appears also to stand here as a summary of the two following petitions. Comparing these two prayers with the paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer in our Church Catechism, it will be seen to comprehend all the topics to which they refer.

† 1 Peter, ii. 5.

their "many priests" were mortal, transitory types of Him "who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life"—of Jesus, the ONE PRIEST of the Gospel dispensation; who, "because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."\* Their sacrifices were figures of the "one sacrifice for sins for ever," offered by our Redeemer on the cross. It is the *whole collective Christian Church* which corresponds to the Jewish Temple, and is its spiritual antitype. The "blessed company of faithful people" is the true earthly temple where God dwells.†

Our places of Christian worship answer to the Jewish Synagogues, in which no material sacrifice was offered, but only the spiritual "sacrifice of prayer and praise." For this is what we offer here. We meet in this house to hear God's word, to pray to, and to praise Him. And our highest praises are poured out when, in this holy Supper of the Lord, "we feed on Him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving," and share the "cup of blessing." It seemeth not to us—the ministers of Christ—"a small thing, that God hath separated us . . . to do the service of the tabernacle; and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them;" why then should we, like the ambitious sons of Levi, "seek the *priesthood* also,"—that priesthood, namely, which is Christ's, and *Christ's alone*?

\* Or, rather, "an *intransmissible* priesthood;" i. e. non-hereditary, not handed down to a successor. [*ἀπαράβατον*, "*in quo nullum successorem habuit*."—*Schleusner*.] Compare Hebrews, vii. 16, 23, 24.

† Compare 1 Cor. iii. ; 2 Cor. vi. 16 ; and 1 Peter, ii. 4-7.

All Christians are indeed in one sense "priests of God;" not any one peculiar class or order of them: for *all* whom Christ has "washed in His own blood" has He "made kings and priests unto God;"\* spiritually kings, and spiritually also (not literally) priests. *You, brethren, are a royal and holy priesthood, "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."*†

And this is the view strongly and significantly set forth in the Communion Service itself. For, notice now the two expressions in the first Post-Communion prayer:—1st. "*Accept this our sacrifice*"—of what?—"of *praise and thanksgiving*." These are the very words of the Apostle Paul, "By Him let us offer the sacrifice of PRAISE to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name."‡ 2nd, "*Here we offer and present to Thee OURSELVES, OUR SOULS, AND BODIES, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee;*" words also quoted from the same Apostle.§

Previously, too, in the Offertory sentences, we had been reminded of St. Paul's exhortation,|| "To do good and to distribute forget not; *for with such sacrifices* God is well pleased."

These are the passages of the New Testament which speak of Christians as having "sacrifices" to offer; and these are the offerings that God desires them to make.

\* Rev. i. 5, 6.      † 1 Peter, ii. 5-9.      ‡ Hebrews, xiii. 15.

§ Rom. xii. 1; "lively" or living, as opposed to the legal sacrifices, which were *slain* victims; "*reasonable*," i. e. "rational," as opposed to *irrational* animals.

|| Hebrews, xiii. 16.

And why are all these passages thus sedulously brought together, and inserted in the Communion Service? In order—we may feel quite certain—to *exclude* the Romish, *unscriptural* notion, that in this sacrament a material or *literal* sacrifice is offered.\*

The Second Thanksgiving is more decidedly an offering of "*Praise*." It also dwells more strongly on that view of the sacraments which is expressed in the Twenty-fifth Article, that "they be certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace, and *God's good will towards us*;" while the *first* dwells chiefly (as we have seen) upon this sacrament as a renewal of *our pledges towards God*, and of our self-dedication to His service. The second form closes with an earnest prayer, for *perseverance* in the Christian life; asking that He who has "assured us of His favour" will "so assist us with His grace, that we *may continue in that holy fellowship*" of which we are, in Christ, made "*very [true] members*;" also that we may "*do all such good works as He has prepared for us to walk in*."†

\* This design on the part of our Reformers is confirmed by the following fact. Originally these words of the Thanksgiving had been used *before* Communion. But lest they might be possibly mistaken to imply a sacrifice, in any sense, of the *consecrated elements*, our Reformers removed them (in Edward the Sixth's Second Prayer-Book) into their present place, to show more unmistakeably that they mean only a spiritual sacrifice of praise and an oblation of the worshippers themselves.

† These words are taken from Eph. ii. 10. The first clause of the "BLESSING" is from Phil. iv. 7; the second from the old Saxon offices, which were in use upwards of 1200 years ago.—See Palmer, chap. iv. sec. xxiii.

And now let us consider some of the chief points connected with this ordinance, which the Scripture and the allusions in the Prayer-Book Service suggest to our attention. I. In the first place, and generally, we may regard it as AN INSTRUCTIVE RITE. It is indeed *more* than this; but it *is* this—symbolically instructive—in many ways. For it was instituted by our Lord,

1stly. "For a continual REMEMBRANCE of His death." "This do in remembrance of Me," which words (reported by Luke) are also twice repeated by the Apostle Paul, who says that he "received them from the Lord;" and who explains them thus: "For as often ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do *show forth the Lord's death*." Thus, then, our Lord Himself appointed an act which was to be a monumental record and memorial of His death—a standing ordinance, which should "*proclaim*" it to all ages. But it is more than an historical commemoration of the *fact* of His death, it is,

2ndly. "A sacrament [a visible sign or representation] of OUR REDEMPTION by Christ's death."\* It forcibly impresses the *sacrificial* nature of His "offering for us." This was clearly signified by many circumstances of the institution.

(a). The occasion of the institution showed it. For the Lord appointed the feast during the celebration of the Passover; the very words of its institution were a well-known part of the Paschal ceremony. That *feast upon a sacrifice* was the commemoration of Israel's deli-

\* Article XXVIII.

verance from Egypt; of their redemption, pardon, and adoption. But the Passover ordinance—the slaying of the Lamb—the sprinkling of its blood—were all prophetic types of the propitiation to be made through the blood of Christ.”\* They were intended to be understood “as shadows of good things to come.”

And our Lord designed to show to His disciples that these prophetic types were now about to be fulfilled in HIM. He first alludes to his approaching sufferings in such a manner as to show Himself to be “THE LAMB OF GOD, that taketh away the sins of the world;” and then, instead of the Passover sacrifices, which were anticipatory of His own, He establishes an ordinance which should refer to His own death as the accomplishment of those legal types and figures. “This is the Lord’s pass-over,” the law declared of each lamb slain from year to year in *commemoration* of the Lord’s *passing over* Israel. “This is my body which is given for you,” said our Lord; using a form of words which the occasion itself was certain to explain in its *natural*, that is to say, its *spiritual* sense.†

\* See Fairbairn on the Typology of Scripture, vol. ii.

† For the *literal* sense would have been most *unnatural*. As Neander (History of Christianity, book vi.) says truly, “If the literal interpretation of the circumstances under which anything is said be contrary to the connexion and design of the discourse, this literal interpretation is unnatural and forced.” And it is worth observing that our Lord appointed this institution *before* His death, *not after it*; to show more plainly that He was not speaking in the gross *literal* sense that some have put upon His words. “As if on purpose to guard against this, He Himself began the celebration of the rite; knowing



When Moses "took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people," he said, "Behold the blood of the Covenant, which God hath made with you." *That* blood was but the type of the "blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin;" which is the true *life* of the world. And Jesus signifies the fulfilment of the type in His own offering, by taking up the words of the Passover ordinance again, and marking them as realized in Him. "This is my blood of the *New Covenant*," &c.; or, as St. Luke and St. Paul give it, "This cup is [i.e. is the *sign*, and

that the Apostles could not have thought that He was holding His own literal body (which had not indeed *yet* been 'broken') in His own hands, or giving them to drink of His own blood (which had not indeed yet been 'shed')."—Archbishop Whately. The Apostles were, besides, well used to such symbolical expressions in their intercourse with our Lord. They had heard Him speak of Himself as a Lamb—a Door—a Vine—a Shepherd; and did not understand Him *literally* then. They had heard Him use like figurative language *seven* times in the explanation of *one parable alone*. "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." In this case every one would allow that the spiritual or figurative sense is really the *natural* one; and that the literal interpretation would be entirely *unnatural*. And when our Lord said, "Drink ye, this is my blood," it would have been peculiarly unnatural for the *Apostles* to have understood Him literally; there being an absolute prohibition in the Jewish law against drinking blood [Lev. xvii. 10–14.] When (in Acts, xv.) they extended this prohibition even to Gentile converts, would they not have made a special explanation and *exception* in the case of the Lord's Supper, had they regarded it as Romanists do?

*pledge*, and *seal* of] the New Covenant in [i. e. ratified in] *MY* blood.”\* Thus, then, the occasion of the institution and the circumstances of the paschal rite throw light and meaning upon the real nature of our Redeemer’s sacrifice, on the one hand ; and on the character of this commemorative ordinance upon the other.†

(*b*). The “breaking of the bread” by our Lord had a like *instructive* purport. He took bread, and brake it, saying, “This is my body which is given for you.” This breaking of the bread was, of course, necessary for the

\* It is unfortunate that the word (*διαθήκη*) should have been rendered “testament” in these places ; for it obscures the connexion of our Lord’s words with those of the Passover rite ; and the *designed* contrast between the blood of the “*Old*” and the “*New*” COVENANT.

† There are many analogies between the *prophetic* and the commemorative feast. Stier strikingly remarks, “The paschal institution dimly symbolized that wonderful admixture of sorrow and joy, death and life, grace and correction, which stamped its character upon the great evening of the Lord’s Supper first, and which still adheres to the Holy Sacrament as the solemnly joyous festival of our pilgrimage *between* our accomplished redemption and the possession of the inheritance of glory. We bless God in it while we abase ourselves ; we abase ourselves while we bless God. We partake of the life of Him who died for us, that we may die in and with Him in order to live . . . . As in its institution the circle of the Apostles was the *paschal family* representing the Church which took its origin from the death of Christ ; so, further, every little company of communicants (as among the Israelites every little number surrounding a paschal table) is a real representation of the entire Church ; of *the many* who, partakers of His body and of His blood, become thereby His BODY.”—Stier, Words of the Lord Jesus, vol. vii., p. 75.

purpose of distribution ;\* but our Lord intimated a further *meaning* when he added the words which St. Paul records, "This is [represents] my body, which is **BROKEN FOR YOU.**" And therefore we may say on His authority, that our breaking of the bread, besides being a preparatory action, necessary to the distribution of it, is also an expressive symbol. "Not only, however, is the bread *broken* and the wine *poured out* (which might have sufficiently represented the wounding of His body and shedding of His blood), but the signification goes farther ; for (c) Both are *partaken* of by those who celebrate the rite."† Our Lord says, "Take, **EAT**, this is my body," &c. " **DRINK** ye all," &c. This act is most expressively a sacrament [or sign] of our redemption ; it intimates that there are present *benefits to be partaken* by us ; that we are celebrating our Lord's death as more than a mere martyrdom. We signify that through that death of Christ, and by faith in His blood, we obtain remission of our sins and all other *benefits* of His passion :‡ as often as we *eat* that bread, and *drink* that cup, we show that from that death comes **LIFE** to us.

It was forbidden by the Levitical Law to "*drink the blood.*" But on this point our Lord, with a suggestive purpose, departs from the type, and the difference of the sacrifices explains the reason of this.

\* The bread was baked, in the East, not like our loaves, but in round *flat cakes*. Hence we read always in Scripture of the "*breaking of bread.*"

† Archbishop Whately On the Sacraments, p. 106.

‡ First Thanksgiving in the Post-Communion Office.

The *personal appropriation of the sacrifice* was, very significantly, only *partial* in the typical economy; eating the body of the animal was partaking of half: it was a federal act, representing the union between God and His people; but the blood being the *life*, men were forbidden to drink it, lest they should think the blood of the slain sacrifices capable of communicating life. "Thus men *stopped short* in the recognition that the blood of goats, calves, and lambs could not give *life*."\*

But Jesus says, "Drink ye of this: for this is my blood." "Where *blood* is, there is also the *life* or the soul; and what will this circumstance (that we drink the *blood* of an offering) say, but that we partake not now of a *dead sacrifice*, such as the Israelites ate, but of a *living*, the life and immortal communication of which was not attained to in the old covenant?"†

The need of such a living union with our Saviour Christ—through faith—as shall hold our souls in life and make Him be to us "our daily—living—bread," is (you remember) the doctrine set forth by Him in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel. And the sacrament which He instituted afterwards was a teaching by *action* of the same great truth. The doctrine which at Capernaum our Saviour taught by words, He afterwards embodied in a perpetual ordinance; and teaches us now by *symbol* "as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup."†

\* Schulz.

† Stier.

‡ It is remarkable that the Apostle John, who does not historically record the *institution* either of Baptism or the Eucharist, exhibits the most fully those important *truths* which the Sacraments involve and

(d.) This supper of the Lord is further instructive, because it is, as the Prayer-Book describes it, "*a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves.*"\* This indeed is taught in the whole rite, and all that is connected with it. But the union among Christians of which it is "a sign," is particularly expressed in one symbolic circumstance, referred to by St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 17. I mean the *oneness* of the bread [or loaf] which is partaken of by all. In verse 16 the Apostle says,—“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (i. e. are we not, in drinking it, *communicating* or jointly partaking) of the blood of Christ?† The bread which we

represent. Thus in the third chapter he gives our Lord's description of that great change—that birth into a new and spiritual life—of which our Baptism is (as the 27th article affirms) “A SIGN.” And in the sixth chapter he records the doctrine which our Lord subsequently embodied in the Eucharist; for in that institution Christ teaches still *by action the same thing which He taught first in words*; this, namely, how the true, everlasting life of our souls and bodies depends upon the death of Christ—appropriated to ourselves by faith; and on the life of Christ communicated to us. *Verbum visibile* [the visible word] was an expression used by Augustin of the Sacraments. I cannot but add Bengel's note [on John, vi. 61] so tersely expressing the above: “Jesus verba sua scienter ita formavit, ut statim et semper illa quidem de *spirituali* fruitione sui agerent proprie; sed posthac eadem consequenter etiam in augustissimum S. Cœnam mysterium, quum id institutum foret, *convenirent*. Etenim ipsam rem hoc sermone propositam, in S. Cœnam contulit.

\* Art. xxviii.

† “For although we do not touch Christ with our teeth and lips, yet we hold and press him by *faith, mind, and spirit*. Nor is that

break, is it not the communion (i. e. are we not in eating it, by faith, jointly partaking) of the body of Christ? Are we not vitally united with CHRIST Himself? and so with one another? "For we," (he adds) "being many, are *one bread* and *one body*; for we are all partakers of that *one bread*." That is to say; when we partake of that one bread [or *loaf*], the bread we eat becomes assimilated with the substance of our bodies—so that essentially and vitally we are *one bread, one body*; so by our common union, soul and body, with CHRIST, the head of our redeemed and glorified humanity—by the *ONE LIFE* of Christ, jointly-participated, and living in us,—we are made *ONE BODY* in Christ Jesus.

But the Lord's Supper has other besides instructive and commemorative uses. It is a Sacrament or outward sign (as we have seen) of a *peculiar kind*; because it is the sign of a *grace given unto us*, and was ordained by Christ as,

II. "A MEANS WHEREBY WE RECEIVE THAT GRACE, and a PLEDGE to assure us thereof." And "the *mean* whereby" the "inward part" and also the spiritual "benefit"—the strengthening and refreshing of our souls"—are to be obtained, is FAITH.\*

This view, together with much of what I have already

faith vain which embraceth Christ, nor that participation cold which is perceived by the *mind, understanding, and spirit*; for so (i. e. spiritually) Christ himself is entirely offered and given to us in these mysteries as much as is possible, that we may truly know that we are flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone, and that He dwells in us and we in Him."—Bishop Jewel, Apology, chap. ii.

\* Art. XXVIII.

said, is well summed up by an old writer, whose words are better than my own :—

“ Bread is the staff of life ; the most common, most necessary, and most wholesome meat [food]. Wine is the most wholesome, the most sprightly [i. e. *inspiring and strengthening*] drink. By them therefore our Lord chose to *represent* that body and blood, by the oblation of which a capacity of life and health was procured to mankind ; the taking in which by right apprehension, tasting it by hearty *faith*, digesting it by careful attention and meditation . . . with serious, steady resolutions of living answerable thereto, will certainly support and maintain our spiritual life in a vigorous health and happy growth of grace ; refreshing our hearts with comfort and satisfaction unspeakable. *He that doth thus*, eats our Saviour’s flesh and drinks His blood,\* *hath eternal life*, and ‘ *shall live for ever*,’ as Himself declares and promises ; which benefits, therefore, in the due performance of this holy duty are conveyed to us.”

\* “ My flesh,” says our Lord (John, vi. 55) “ is meat indeed ; and my blood is drink indeed.” The word translated “ *indeed* ” (ἀληθῆς, or, as the best MSS. give it, ἀληθινός), means really, truly, or “ *verily*,” as our Catechism (referring to these words of Christ) expresses it,—“ the body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received.” But this is carefully explained in Article xxviii,—“ The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper, *only after an heavenly and spiritual manner*.” When Christ declares, my flesh is *truly* meat, &c. He means “ not *literally*, but *more than that*” [Stier] ; that is He means that it is so in the *highest sense* ; that CHRIST HIMSELF united to us is the true, real, stay and staff of our lives—of our souls and bodies ; in contrast with our natural food that “ *perishes in the using*.” In *this* sense Christ is the *true*, living, real, eternal Bread, though that which Moses gave was also “ bread from heaven.” “ He is the *true* Light,” [though John the Baptist was a light also, for Christ declares of him that “ he was a burning and a shining light,” yet He Himself alone is the true Light which, “ *coming into the world, lighteth every man*.” “ In this sense also He is (as Stier observes, ‘ external things being but shadows of real, true relations’) the true Vine, the true Foundation, the true Door, the essential Way, the true and real Forerunner, Shepherd, Bishop, Physician, Master, Witness.”—See Stier, vol. vi. p. 202 ; also Dean Trench’s New Testament Synonyms. Archbishop Whately gives another parallel : “ I am the true vine,” denoted not His being a vine in the *literal* sense, but in the highest and most *important* sense ; even as Paul says that ‘ that is not circum-

And, further on, the same author says of this holy sacrament:—

“It was designed as a proper and efficacious instrument to raise in us pious affections towards our good God and gracious Redeemer; to dispose us to all holy practice; to confirm our faith; to nourish our hope; to quicken our resolutions of walking carefully in the ways of duty; to unite us more fastly to our Saviour; and to combine us in charity one toward another.”\*

There is one other view of the Lord's Supper that is referred to in the words, “—“As often as ye eat this bread, &c. ye do show the Lord's death *until he come*.” These words exhibit it as,

III. A PROPHETIC TYPE. This reference seems also pointed out by our Lord Himself in that remarkable expression used immediately after the words of institution: “I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.”† “The holy Supper points not only back to the past, but also to the future. It has not only a memorial, but also a prophetic significance. We not only show forth the death of our Lord in it *until He come*; but we have also *the time to think upon when He will come*, to celebrate anew, and in another manner, His sacred feast with His own in the kingdom of glory. Every celebration of the sacrament is a type and prophetic anticipation of the GREAT MARRIAGE SUPPER which

cision which is outward in the flesh' (which, *literally*, it clearly is), but that . circumcision is of the heart;’ i. e. in the noblest and best sense.”—On Sacraments, p. 92.

\* Isaac Barrow On the Doctrine of the Sacraments.

† Matt. xxvi. 29; also Mark, xiv. 25.



is prepared for the Church at the re-appearing of Christ.”\* “This word ‘*until that day*’ includes that *terminus* in which the interval of separation will cease, and the eating and drinking appointed for the present time will be done away, or pass over into another. It is as if the Lord had said, Do this *in the meantime, until* I am again with you! The sacrament is, looking back, a *commemorative* feast; in the present it is a *receiving* and *partaking* of the Lord; the true possession of Himself; nevertheless, in *prospect* it is something preliminary and transitory; an essential type and effectual pledge of that feast which in the great and permanent morning of the renewed world—in *THAT DAY*, which is ever the one great day—Christ will provide for His own.”

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The Declaration at the end of the Communion Service (explanatory of the reasons for kneeling at the Sacrament, and strongly disclaiming any “adoration” of the Sacramental Bread and Wine, or any *corporal* presence of Christ’s Natural Flesh and Blood) was first appended in A. D. 1552; was omitted in Queen Elizabeth’s reign; and restored in A. D. 1662, though not printed as a Rubric.

The latter part of this Declaration contains the words of Frith, who is recorded in Fox’s Book of Martyrs as having suffered martyrdom *on account of them*, in the reign of Henry VIII. There is a letter of Cranmer’s on this subject, which Mr. Froude has given in his History of England, (vol. i.):—“Other news have we none notable but that

\* Thiersch, in Lectures on Catholicism, &c., quoted by Stier, Words of the Lord Jesus, vol. vii. p. 167. The words which follow the above quotation are Stier’s own.

one Frith, which was in the Tower in prison, was appointed by the King's Grace to be examined before me . . . whose opinion was so notably erroneous that we could not despatch him . . . He thought it not necessary to be believed as an article of our faith that there is the very corporal presence of Christ within the host and sacrament of the altar. And surely I myself sent for him three or four times, to persuade him to leave that imagination. Notwithstanding now he is at a final end with all examination, for my Lord of London hath given sentence, and delivered him to the secular power, when he looketh every day to go unto the fire." Mr. Froude adds,

"Twenty years later another fire was blazing under the walls of Oxford; and the hand which was now writing these light lines was blackening in the flames of it, paying there the penalty of the same '*imagination*.'

"It is affecting to know that Frith's writings were the instruments of Cranmer's conversion. And the fathers of the Anglican Church have left a monument of their sorrow for the shedding of this innocent blood, in the Order of the Communion Service, which closes with the very words on which the Primate with his brother bishops had sat in judgment. '*The natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here: it being against the truth of Christ's natural body to be at one time in more places than one.*'"

#### NOTE F.

It is directed in the rubric that the minister, "*when he delivereth the bread [or cup] to any one, shall say, 'The Body,' &c., 'the Blood,' &c.*"

And at the Savoy Conference in A. D. 1661, when the Nonconformist divines desired that it might "suffice to speak the words to divers jointly," the bishops made this answer, "It is most requisite that the minister deliver the bread and wine into every particular

communicant's hand, and repeat the words in the singular number; for so much as it is the propriety of sacraments to make particular *obsignation* to each believer; and it is our visible profession that by the grace of God, *Christ tasted death for every man.*"\*

Whatever be the authority of the Savoy Conference (though indeed that was, after all, not a regular Church-Convocation, only a Committee of a few divines appointed by the King) still the rule in the Prayer-Book is very clear as to the general intention of it. And therefore no minister has any right to depart from it, as a matter of private license—or except *under peculiar circumstances*—except, in short, for reasons amounting, one may say, to a *necessity*.

Take, however, a case which every *city* clergyman knows to exist, of a large congregation, say 1200. Of these it may be calculated that about 800 *ought* to communicate.

What is the clergyman to do in such a case? Should he insist on separately repeating, the communion alone (if all that ought, attended) would occupy some hours;† but,

1st. Will not this have the effect of proclaiming to the congregation, on the face of the Service, and by the very *mode of its administration*, that so large a number of them are *not expected to remain*?

2ndly. With those that do remain, will it not make the ordinance a weariness to many, instead of "strengthening and refreshing?"

If we apply the precept of the Apostle—the fundamental law to which all church regulations and ritual observances are to be referred—"LET ALL THINGS BE DONE TO EDIFICATION,"—does it not seem warrantable in such a case—*when one is forced to choose*—to give precedence to the *higher* law? For is not this to "learn what that meaneth, I will have *mercy*, and not sacrifice?"

Consider, then, the case supposed. A clergyman finds a *necessity*

\* Cardwell, *History of Conferences*, p. 321-354.

† Even where the custom of joint-repetition is adopted, the service in some city churches occupies frequently *two* full hours. And it is very likely that if the Reformers of our Church contemplated the probability of such large numbers of communicants, it was in such cases as one of the rubrics refers to, "where there are *many* priests and deacons," not two only, or three at most.

existing for deviation from the strict letter of the rubric : he has the sanction, so far as it may go, not indeed of *law*, but of a *usage* prevailing in such cases in the Church ; he feels persuaded that if the living Church were enabled to express its opinion in Convocation assembled, the rule would probably be modified so as to leave an option *under such circumstances*. He refers the decision of this matter to his Bishop, who, though he cannot *order* a departure from the rubrics, is the lawful authority to decide in cases where law and usage are, by *change of circumstances*, brought into conflict. He obtains the sanction of his Ordinary, whose "godly admonitions" he has also promised "with a glad mind and will to follow." Can he, therefore, be fairly accused of "wilful, contemptuous transgression of authority," if, under all these circumstances, upon good reasons, and a full conscientious consideration of them, he adopts the custom referred to ?

And with regard to the doctrine of universal Redemption—supposed to be involved, it may be urged,

1. If any who *have the Gospel* in their hands deny the truth that "Christ tasted death for every man ;"\* if those who assert the same doctrine over and over in the public prayers, still *do not believe it*, they will scarcely be restrained from their denial of the truth by any particular mode of administering the sacrament.

2. The *joint-repetition* of the words has in fact been used for years among the Wesleyan Methodists, who, as is well-known, *maintain* the evangelical truth of Universal Redemption.

3. When the words are repeated jointly to each "Table," the distribution of the elements is in fact an *application* of these words to each. It is an "*obsignation*," by action, to each individual of all the benefits included in the words, "TAKE, EAT, in remembrance that Christ died for THEE," &c.

\* Hebrews, ii. 9.

## LECTURE IX.

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### THE BAPTISMAL OFFICES.

#### COVENANT PRIVILEGES.

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1 Cor. xii. 13.

*“By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.”*

IN entering on the consideration of the Baptismal Offices, I begin with that entitled in the Prayer-Book, “The Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants, to be used in the Church.”

It is greatly to be wished that this were always a really “*public*” ordinance; for the good reasons given in the opening rubric, which directs that it shall be administered “when the most number of people come together; as well as for that (1), the congregation then present may *testify* the receiving of them that be newly baptized into the number of Christ’s Church; as also (2), because in the baptism of infants every man present may *be put in remembrance* of his own profession made to God in his baptism.”

And in order to secure the presence of a congregation,

it is appointed that baptisms shall take place after the second lesson at Morning or Evening Prayer.

In practice, however, this is too frequently made a *private* service, although "used in the Church." Some half dozen people—often the three sponsors only—stand by the font, to witness the reception of the new member into Christ's flock; from the congregation of Christ's people there is no welcome and no prayer. This is a cold, unsympathizing, way to carry out the Saviour's command, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

And our people are themselves also seriously losers by not witnessing more frequently this, one of the most instructive and beautiful services of our Church. A thorough familiarity with the truths which it contains would throw a flood of meaning on many parts of our Liturgy; would serve to bring our tone of religious thought more into harmony with that of the apostolic writers than it popularly is; and would convey more sound Christian teaching than almost any sermon can.

As a security against the ignorant or superstitious *repetition* of this introductory rite, the question is first asked, "*Hath this child been already baptized or no?*"

Then, in a preliminary address, the minister states briefly the grounds on which the institution rests; and asks the prayers of the people for the child now to be baptized. These grounds are:—

1stly, "*Forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin.*" So speaks David, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."\*

\* Psalm li. 5.

2ndly, Our Saviour Christ saith, "*None can enter into the kingdom of God except he be regenerate, and born anew of water and the Holy Ghost.*"

These statements show how even a little child *needs* baptism; in other words, needs all the mercies of that Gospel covenant into which baptism is the appointed means of introducing us. For what is the child's natural condition? It is "born in sin;" the inheritor of a tainted nature; a member only of the fallen race of Adam; an "alien from the commonwealth of Israel;" a "stranger from the covenant of promise."

How are the children of Adam delivered out of this natural condition? Only through Jesus Christ. "*Neither is there salvation in any other*; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."\*

God has made with man a covenant of grace in Jesus Christ. In Him are freely promised the pardon of our sin, the cleansing from it, the bestowal of all spiritual blessings. In Him is life; for "as in Adam all die (as, being his descendants, are subject unto death), even so in Christ shall all be made alive."† He is God's "well-beloved Son;" if then we are made one with Him, God looks on *us* as sons, as His *adopted* children.

To be received, therefore, into that body of which Christ is the living Head, is the first step appointed for salvation. And so the order of the blessings conferred on us is expressed in our Church Catechism; in which

\* Acts, iv. 12.

† 1 Cor. xv. 22.

we say that in our baptism we were made, 1, members of Christ; 2, children of God; 3, inheritors of the kingdom of heaven: *because* members of Christ, *therefore* children; and "if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ."\*

Into this membership, this covenant, this adopted family, we are exhorted to ask the Father, that of His bounteous mercy He would take the child (not born into this family by nature), that he "may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost; received into Christ's holy Church; and be made a lively member of the same."†

In the first of these two prayers (which was composed by Luther) two Old Testament types of baptism are instanced. First, the salvation of "Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water."

\* Rom. viii. 17. "Were the sacraments considered indeed as *seals* of this inheritance—annexed to the great charter of it [the Word of God]—*seals of salvation*, this would powerfully beget a fit appetite for the Lord's Supper, when we are invited to it, and would beget a due esteem of baptism; would teach you more frequent and fruitful thoughts of your own baptism; and more pious consideration of it, when you require it for your children."—Archbishop Leighton on 1 Pet. iii. 19-21.

† This preliminary address, the prayer that follows, and a great part of this office, were taken from the Reformed Service-book (referred to in the Introduction) called Hermann's Consultation. The Baptismal Service in that book is principally due to Martin Luther.—See Laurence's Bampton Lectures.

The introductory part was founded on the primitive "Order" used in receiving persons into the class of "Catechumens," to be instructed, previously to baptism, in the doctrines and duties of Christianity. See Palmer, vol. ii. ch. v.



This is referred to by the Apostle Peter, in language that (literally and accurately rendered) throws light upon the meaning of the prayer: "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by (i. e. *through the instrumentality of*) water; the *antitype of which*, namely, BAPTISM, doth now save us."\*

Here is a compound type. The ark is taken to represent Christ's holy Church; or else (if we will apply the figure more closely still), the family of Noah—the godly seed—represents properly the Church, which is "the blessed company of all faithful people:" and Jesus is Himself the Ark.†

The salvation of those "eight souls" from temporal destruction was but the shadow of our *spiritual* deliverance in Christ. The instrumentality by which the ark floated in safety was water; thus, by a like outward instrumentality, baptism now saves us (*not*, observe, the "*water of baptism*," but "*baptism doth now save us*"); not the mere outward application of the water, "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh," (which is all the

\* Or *is now saving* (present; the rescue not being as yet fully accomplished).—Alford on 1 Peter, iii. 20, 21.

† "You, who have fled into Him for refuge, wrong Him not so far as to question your safety. What, though the flood of *former* guiltiness rise high, thine Ark shall still be above them; and the higher they rise, the higher He shall rise; shall have the more glory in freely justifying and saving thee. Though thou find the remaining power of sin still within thee, yet it shall not sink thine Ark. There was in this Ark sin, yet they were saved from the flood."—Archbishop Leighton on 1 Pet. iii.

outward material element could do);\* but that true spiritual cleansing which is represented and designed;—which gives us a living part in Him who died and rose again, and is “on the right hand of God,” assuring us, by His own resurrection from the dead, that we, who are united to Him, shall be sharers in the salvation and the glory of Him who is our Head.

You perceive that the Apostle says, “were saved by water;” that is, by water, as the *instrument*. The same

\* “Not by a natural force of the element; though, sacramentally used, it only can wash away the filth of the body; its *physical* efficacy or power reaches no farther; but it is in the hand of the Spirit of God, as other sacraments are, and as the word itself is, to purify the conscience, and convey grace and salvation to the soul, by the reference it hath to, and union with, that which it represents.

“It saves by the answer of a good conscience unto God, and it affords that, by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.”—Leighton.

The word translated “*answer*” (ἰπερώρημα) means properly a question, or an “*inquiry after*,” and so Dean Alford translates here: “the inquiry of a good conscience after God, i. e. the seeking after God in a good and pure conscience, which is the aim and end of the Christian baptismal life.”

Schleusner in his Lexicon gives the word as signifying also “the question and answer made in a mutual compact—a *contract* or *stipulation*, inducing a reciprocal obligation;” intimating, in the first place, that the conscience of the baptized must respond to the promised mercy of God; and not without reference (he adds) to the ancient usage of interrogating those about to be baptized; and the baptismal pledges of “renouncing sin, and living a Christian life.”

Perhaps Archbishop Leighton’s comment may be the best; it is at least worth giving:—

“The asking or *questioning* of conscience, which comprises likewise its answer; for the word intends correspondence of the conscience with

appears to be the meaning in the prayer—"were saved in the ark from perishing, by water;" that is, not, "from perishing by water," but were saved from perishing, *through the instrumentality* of that very water that destroyed the old world and its corrupt inhabitants. "The waters of the flood drowned the ungodly—washed them away, them and their sin together as one, being inseparable; and *upon the same waters*, the ark floating preserved Noah. Thus the waters of baptism are intended as a deluge to drown sin, and to save the believer, who by faith is separated both from the world and from his sin; so it sinks, and he is saved."\*

God; and with itself as towards God, or in the sight of God. And indeed God's questioning it is *by itself*; it is His deputy in the soul. He makes it pose itself for Him, and before Him, concerning its own condition; and so the answer it gives itself in that posture, He, as it were, sitting and hearing it, in His presence, is an answer made unto Him."

"It possibly alludes" (he says) "to the questions and answers in baptism; but it further, by way of resemblance, expresses the inward questioning and answering which is transacted within, betwixt the soul and itself, and the soul and God, and so is *allusively* (by allusion) called a questioning and answering . . . . and this is the great business of conscience, to sit, and examine, and judge within; to *hold courts* in the soul. And it is of continual necessity that it be so; there can be no *vacation* of this judicature without great damage to the estate of the soul; yea, not a day ought to pass without a session of conscience within," &c. &c.

\* Leighton. The original petition in Luther's Service-book expresses the same idea, and defines also the meaning of our Prayer. The words are, "that whatsoever pollution he hath taken of Adam it may be drowned and put away *by this holy flood*, that being separated from the number of the ungodly," &c.

Life out of death—salvation in destruction, is a principle that we find often in God's dealings with men. Thus was it in the deluge; a flood destroying the old world and the ungodly—the *same* flood being made to Noah and his family a *baptism*. Thus also the Red Sea, in which the Egyptians were drowned, is called with reference to Israel a "baptism;" for this it was, as separating the Lord's people from their enemies, and from their old Egyptian state. And, in like manner, in Baptism there is represented a death and a life—a destroying of the old man with its corrupt affections and its lusts, that the new man should live, and be raised up a godly seed, to bring forth fruit to God. Here is the twofold process, professed in every case (in every *baptized heart* the type is realized, the profession becomes fact);—a slaying with Christ of the whole body of sin; a rising, through the resurrection of Christ, to a new life.\*

The second type of baptism referred to in the prayer is that which I have alluded to above—"Who also didst safely lead the children of Israel thy people through the Red Sea, figuring thereby thy holy baptism."

For this we have directly the authority of the Apostle Paul, who says that "our fathers were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."\* He means that they were brought thereby, as by a kind of baptism,

\* "In the *microcosm* of the individual believer, there is the perishing of an old world of sin and death; and the establishment of a new world of righteousness and life everlasting."—Fairbairn on Typology of Scripture, vol. i. 286.

† 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

under the authority of Moses, who stood thenceforward towards them in the recognised relation of Leader, Master, Prophet, and Lawgiver. In like manner, we are "baptized unto, or *into*, Christ;" brought by baptism under His guardianship and sway; we enter into a new relationship toward Christ; we own Him as our Head, our Deliverer, our Lawgiver, and Leader.

We are commanded to be baptized "*in*," or, rather, "*into* the NAME of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."\*

This Tri-une God becomes by covenant our God; our Father, our Redeemer, our Sanctifier; and we profess thus to believe; and count ourselves His children—His followers—the people whom He sanctifieth.

But, like Israel, we do not enter immediately on Canaan. In these things also "they were (St. Paul tells us) our examples," or our *types*. Our march lies through the wilderness. We too have dangers, difficulties, and temptations to encounter. We may "lust after evil things, as they also lusted." We may "tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." We may "murmur as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."†

God made the sea a way for His ransomed to pass over from the state of bondage to the state of freedom; and so does He call us, in baptism, "into a state of liberty."

But our journey and our work are then only begun. And we must "labour therefore to enter into that rest"—

\* Matt. xxviii. 19.

† See 1 Cor. x. 1-13.

the rest that remaineth for those who persevere and overcome unto the end—the faithful Israel of God.\*

As the Church Catechism expresses it, “I heartily thank our heavenly Father that He hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; and I pray unto God to give me His grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life’s end.”

They only that “continue,” shall take up hereafter that triumphant hymn with which the shores of the Red Sea resounded; they only shall “stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God; and sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the LAMB.”†

The second collect is an appeal to Him who is “the aid of all that need; the helper of all that flee to Him for succour; the Life of them that believe; the Resurrection of the dead;” that the child, coming to His holy baptism, “may receive remission of his sins, by spiritual regeneration,” &c.

Now, we all say in the Nicene Creed, “I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.” We acknowledge that by one baptism we are introduced into that covenant, in which remission of our sins is sealed to us by promise; brought to that Saviour through whom alone our sins can be remitted.

And this “Article of our belief,” we are able to prove “by most certain warrants of holy Scripture.”

Peter said to the men of Judæa, “Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, *for the remission of sins.*”

\* Heb. iv. 9-11.

† Rev. xv. 2, 3.

Ananias says to Saul, "And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

And our Lord declares, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."\*

But how do infants need this remission or forgiveness of sins? They have not indeed committed actual sins; but they are born in a sinful state: they have what our Ninth Article calls "original or *birth-sin*"; that is, the fault and corruption of nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam."

But God does not, for this cause, shut them out from mercy. He would take them out of this state. And for this very purpose He opens with men a covenant of *grace*.

It cannot, under any circumstances, be otherwise than by an act of undeserved mercy on the part of God, that any child of sinful man can be received into His favour.

The promises of the Gospel covenant are to all alike—young and old—free gifts of God, through Christ.

These promises may be described as three-fold: 1st, the pardon of sin; 2nd, the help of the Spirit; 3rd, everlasting life. Now, were a child to die, could it—the heir of a fallen nature, the member of a family made "subject unto death"—obtain *eternal life* on any other grounds than "as the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord?"

The Bible shuts us up to one answer as to this.

\* See Acts, ii. 38; Acts, xxii. 16; Mark, xvi. 16.

If, then, it is only by an act of *grace*—through Jesus Christ—that a child “born in sin” could be received into the Church of God in heaven, must we not say that it is of the *same grace* alone that it is received into His Church on earth, admitted to favour, and adopted to blessings here?

We do not say that little children who die unbaptized are lost. God forbid! The Bible does not say so. Our Church does not assert it. And our Reformers utterly disclaim such an opinion. This is their own language: “Theirs seems to be a scrupulous superstition who so tie down the grace of God and the Holy Spirit to the sacramental elements, as to affirm expressly that no infant can obtain salvation who dies before it can be brought to baptism; *an opinion which we are far from entertaining.*”\*

We read, in a rubric which now stands at the end of the Office for Public Baptism of Infants, that “It is certain by God’s Word that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.” But this is part of a longer rubric, that, in all editions of the Prayer-Book till 1662, was placed in the Order for Confirmation, immediately before the Catechism, which formed originally a part of that Order. The words were these: “And that no man shall think that any detriment shall come to children by deferring

\* From the Reformed code of Ecclesiastical Laws (*Reform. Leg. Eccl.*) drawn up in the reigns of Henry and Edward by a number of Commissioners, including Cranmer as the chief.—See Laurence’s Bampton Lectures, p. 70.



of their Confirmation, he shall know for truth, that it is certain by God's Word that children being baptized, have all things necessary to their salvation : and be undoubtedly saved."

In early times Confirmation was administered to infants immediately after Baptism—as still in the Eastern Church ; and it was therefore supposed by some that Baptism was incomplete without Confirmation. But our Reformers state in the beginning of the rubric referred to—part of which stands in our Prayer-Book as the Prefatory Address in the Confirmation Service—that, "To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying . . . it is thought good that none hereafter shall be confirmed but such as can say . . . the Articles of the Faith, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments." The object of the latter part of the rubric was therefore to show parents that Baptism was sufficient for their infants, and immediate Confirmation not necessary, as they might imagine, to perfect it.

Nothing, therefore, whatever is implied as to infants unbaptized ; the rubric refers to the *non-necessity* of Confirmation for the salvation of infants, and not at all to the absolute necessity of Baptism, which the Catechism itself teaches to be only "*generally necessary*."\*

\* And the Nonconformist Divines admitted this at the Savoy Conference, saying, "Although we charitably suppose the meaning of these words was only to exclude the necessity of any other Sacrament to baptized infants, &c., yet these words are dangerous . . . and therefore we desire they may be expunged." The answer of the Bishops was: "It is evident that the meaning of these words is, that

In administering a covenant rite, we speak of the promises engaged to those admitted into the covenant. Of others we affirm nothing, for with such the Church—in respect of her outward ministries and ordinances—is not concerned.

The Church is, in respect of all such cases, silent, because, *as a Church*, she has—in respect of these—nothing to say. To the All-Wise, All-Merciful God Himself they may be left.\*

It is enough for us to know that the Father loveth the souls which He has made; and “willeth not a sinner’s

children baptized, and dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved, *though they be not confirmed*,” &c. In the “Institution of a Christian Man,” published in the reign of Henry VIII., the words of our rubric occur, with this addition—“*and else not*.” If, then, the distinction, in the rubric referred to, be between children baptized and *unbaptized*, the omission of the words “and else not” shows that our Reformers intended only to declare absolutely of those admitted into God’s covenant that they are “undoubtedly saved,” declaring nothing with respect to others. But I believe the true explanation of the present rubric to be what I have given above.

\* The words of the first Prayer, also, had been, “May be received into the ark of Christ’s Church, *and so saved from perishing*,” but our Reformers wisely struck out the last four words. Though it is probable that Luther did not mean them in the harsh sense that they might possibly be thought to bear; for, in his Commentary on Genesis, ch. xvii., he very decidedly disclaims the notion that unbaptized infants are therefore excluded from salvation; saying, e. g. “God’s nature is to have mercy. We do not therefore hold Him to be so severe against the children of His people, whom death removes so as to prevent their formal admission into the covenant. For He willeth to have all men saved.”—Comp. Laurence’s Bampton Lectures.

death.” And we can safely trust all cases of this sort to the Love which passeth knowledge.

The children who die unbaptized are not, indeed, by human instrumentality received into the Church and covenant on earth; yet, independently of *that*, Christ may bring them to Himself directly. Not by “*our* office and ministry,” but by his Angel of death, He will then have said, “Suffer the little children to come unto *ME* ;” and even though *men* kept them from the Saviour, and “forbad them,” yet for that Saviour’s sake the Father’s love is free and large enough to take them in.\*

But our own present duty is connected with the Church on earth, not with the Church in heaven. Our practical concern is simply this—to bring each child at once to Christ—to make him a member of the Christian covenant in that one way which our Lord Himself appointed.†

\* Coleridge has a beautiful epitaph

“ON AN INFANT WHICH DIED BEFORE BAPTISM:—

“ ‘Be, rather than be called, a child of God,’  
Death whispered!—With assenting nod,  
Its head upon its mother’s breast,  
The baby bowed, without demur—  
Of the kingdom of the blest  
Possessor, not inheritor.”

† In answer to the question, “How many sacraments hath Christ ordained in His Church?” our Catechism says, “two only, as generally necessary to salvation,” &c. It is not accurate to say that “generally” here means “commonly,” or “for the most part;” it properly meant what we now express by the word “*generically* ;” that is, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are necessary to all Christians *as*

Whether the child live or die, our hope for it lies where the hope of all born of an alienated race—born with a sinful heart, must lie—in the free love of God. Be it ever so young, it *needs* that which we ask for it, “the benediction of God’s heavenly washing.”

And if not too young to need this, why should we think it is too young to need or have the blessing of God’s guardian presence?

If a mother prays for her infant, that God would watch over the young child’s life, and keep it from all adversities which may happen to the body, shall she not also pray that the Father of spirits will watch the dawning life of the young soul? When she dedicates her little

*a class or genus.* To be baptized or “christened” is a *generic* distinction of Christians as such; “a mark or difference whereby Christian men are discerned from other that be not christened.”—Art. XXVII.

But even a “general” [generic] rule may admit of exceptions. The power of abstract reasoning—the gift of speech—are “generally necessary” to MAN,—i. e. to the *genus*, “homo”—yet some men are idiots, and some deaf and dumb. And though it belongs to man generically to have two arms and two legs, men have been born and lived without either legs or arms.

So, though the sacraments be ordained as “generally necessary,”—wherever the providence of God may make exceptions, such exceptions we may be sure will be allowed. And thus the common explanation of the above words, viz., “*wherever they can be had*,” comes to be substantially the same as that which I have given. But the word “generally” is used here as the translation of “*generaliter*,” not “*plerumque*,” so it is used also in Art. XVII.—“We must receive God’s promises in such wise as they be generally set forth,” &c., “*generaliter*”—generically, to Christians, *as a class*,—collectively, opposed to “*individually*.”

one to Christ, may she not pray that His own Spirit's presence would, from the first, and always, be that child's safeguard and strength? and that, according as the reason opens, and the will begins to stir, the Spirit's life may also live in him, and grow; that through the guidance of that Spirit he may be brought to the eternal kingdom promised in Christ our Lord? Surely these blessings may be asked in faith and hope for our children. They want them, simply because they, naturally, have them not; and if their tender age does not prevent their absolutely *needing* them, why should it be a bar to their receiving them? If not too young to want God's mercies in all these ways, they cannot be too young for Him who "knoweth our necessities," to *grant* those mercies too.

But His own word removes all doubt upon the matter. We know that God did take the children of Jewish parents into covenant in infancy. The Jewish infants were by Divine appointment circumcised when eight days old; and they were not regarded as members of the covenant *till* circumcised. And when our Lord gave the command,—“Go ye, *make disciples of all nations*,” i. e. enrol them as members of the Church, “*by baptizing them in the name*,” &c., His Jewish followers would naturally infer that children were by this corresponding rite to be received into the Christian covenant.\* “If it had

\* For so the words, Matt. xxviii. 19, are accurately rendered. “In the Lord's words, as in the Church, the process of ordinary discipleship is *from baptism to instruction* (‘teaching them to observe,’ &c. v. 20), i. e. is, *from admission in infancy into the covenant, and grow-*

been the rule to admit adults only into the Mosaic covenant—if infancy had been a bar to any one's reception—then they would never have thought of baptizing *children* into the Christian Church, unless *expressly commanded* to do so. If, as is the fact, they had been accustomed to enrol in the *Jewish* Church their own infants, and proselytes of all ages, then they would, as a matter of course, adhere to the same rule in reference to the Christian Church, unless *expressly forbidden*.”\*

For surely they would take for granted, that the new covenant in Christ would be not *less* free and loving than the old one. And had Christians been intended to keep back thenceforward those whom God had before brought near to Him, express restraints and prohibitions would have been given to that effect. For no one can say that such prohibitions were not necessary: the universal prevalence of infant baptism, from the earliest ages, is a conclusive proof that they *were* necessary, if Christ had meant that children were not to be baptized.

But more—had not our Lord himself directly encouraged believers to bring their little ones to Him?

That sanction is appealed to in the next part of the Baptismal service.

The gospel story is repeated, that tells how they brought to Him their little children—their *infants*—as

*ing into ‘observing all things,’ &c.—the exception being, what circumstances rendered so frequent in the early Church, instruction before baptism, in the case of adults.*”—Alford.

\* Archbishop Whately's Charge on Infant Baptism.—See “On the Sacraments,” p. 33.

the word in St. Luke (*τὰ βρέφη*) means—that “He might put His hands upon them, and pray.” And the Address which follows St. Mark’s story impresses on us these “words of our Saviour Christ—how He commanded the children to be brought unto Him—how He blamed those that would have kept them from Him.” He was “much displeased” with those who rashly thought that little children, because too young to *understand* His blessing, were too young therefore to receive one of Him, and to be really blessed and benefited by it. He rebuked the thought of the disciples, that to ask Him to devote His time and give His blessing to those unconscious infants, was but to waste that time and precious benediction. And “by His outward gesture and deed He declared [gave proof of] His good-will toward them; for He embraced them in His arms; He laid His hands upon them, and blessed them.”

If Jesus were on earth amongst us, we also—remembering that story, the beauty of which seems just as touching and as fresh when it is read for the five hundredth time as for the first—we also should gladly bring to Him our little children to be blest. But He is really and indeed among us; and we *may* bring them to Him in this His own appointed way; and dedicate them to Him and to His service.

Therefore, as our twenty-seventh Article affirms, “The baptism of young children is in any wise [i. e. by all means, “*omnino*”] to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable [as that which most agrees] with the institution of Christ.” The burden of proof lies altogether

on those who would reject an ordinance observed, from the beginning, in the Universal Church of Christ. The objection has, indeed, been raised—"If the Baptism of Infants was practised in the early days of the Church, how is it that we have no definite accounts of Infant-baptism in the Acts of the Apostles?" For a very intelligible reason. The "Acts of the Apostles" are a history of the first planting of the Gospel. The narrative tells of the Apostles and Evangelists going hither and hither preaching and persuading—whom? Of course, persons who were capable of receiving argument—such persons as were capable of being converted from unbelief to Christianity. In a modern Missionary report—relating the first efforts to Christianize an unbelieving people—we should not expect to hear of the Missionaries baptizing infants. They would not do this till the grown-up generation had accepted, to some extent, the faith. They would not baptize any little child, unless, in consequence of the prior conversion of at least one of its parents, they could have a reasonable hope of the child's being brought up as a Christian. Just so, the Acts of the Apostles naturally describe the first preachers of the Gospel as evangelizing the adult generation. But in Acts, vii. 38, 39, we find St. Peter saying—"Repent, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, AND TO YOUR CHILDREN," &c. And in 1 Cor. vii. St. Paul refers plainly to the difference which is made in the position of children by the conversion of even one parent to Chris-



tianity ; “ For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband ; else were your children unclean ; but now are they holy : ” i. e. either “ are dedicated to God in baptism ” or “ are so far holy (being the children of, at least, one Christian parent) as to be *admissible to baptism*. ” And the same Apostle addresses young children on the supposition that they are members of the Christian covenant ; saying—“ Children, obey your parents in the Lord ; ” and he charges fathers to educate them accordingly—to “ bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. ” \*

In bringing an infant “ to his holy Baptism ” we may therefore enter into the language of the Exhortation after the Gospel,—“ Doubt ye not, therefore, but *earnestly believe* that He will likewise favourably receive this present infant ; that He will embrace him with the arms of His mercy ; that He will give unto him the blessing

\* Eph. vi. 1, 4. It has always appeared to me that the arguments founded on St. Paul’s having “ baptized the *hóusehold* of Stephanas,” and, at Philippi, the gaoler “ *and all his*,” prove little ; and inconclusive arguments are worse than none. The facts which these arguments *assume* may certainly be true—1stly, that in these households infants were comprised ; and, 2ndly, that if there were, they were included among those whom Paul baptized. But, even admitting the first probability, this latter consequence is the very thing which a Baptist would deny ; and he would answer, that in assuming this we are taking the whole question for granted. At best, these are what Coleridge calls “ smoke-like wreaths of inference ”—“ inverted pyramids, where the apex is the base. ” He has a lively illustration of their illogical and insufficient character.—See Aids to Reflection, vol. i., p. 296.

of eternal life, and make him partaker of His everlasting kingdom. Wherefore we, being thus persuaded of the good will of our Heavenly Father towards this infant, declared by His Son Jesus Christ; and nothing doubting but that He favourably alloweth [approveth\*] this charitable work of ours," &c., are invited to join in a THANKSGIVING to God for having called us "to the knowledge of His grace and faith in Him;" a prayer for ourselves, that God would in us "increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith;" and for the child, "Give Thy Holy Spirit to this infant, that he may be born again, and be made an heir of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ,"† &c. Now, these are very solemn words. How can we use them, except we honestly and thoroughly believe them?

But, surely, if we may bring our children to Christ, *His* "favourably receiving" them is warrant enough on which all blessings may be looked for. We may depend on God's own saying,—“How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? And I said, thou shalt call me, my Father, and shalt not turn away from me.”‡

\* ALLOWETH, from French *Allower*, Lat. *Allaudare*, “to commend.” Compare Psalm xi. 6 [Prayer-Book], “The Lord *alloweth* [approveth] the righteous;” and Luke, xi. 48, “Ye bear witness that ye *allow* [approve, *συνευδοκῆτε*] the deeds of your fathers.”

† This Prayer, or Thanksgiving, the Exhortation that precedes it, and the address to the sponsors, are all derived from Hermann's “*Consultation*.” The Thanksgiving is evidently intended to be repeated aloud by all present, “Let us . . . give thanks . . . and say,” &c.

‡ Jer. iii. 19.

We may then ask for this "adoption" in Christ Jesus. We may ask for the Spirit—"in faith, nothing wavering"—and ask it upon the ground of this adoption—for it is written, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."\*

And we may ask for life, because this life is in the Son, who came that we "might have life, and have it more abundantly."† These are the covenanted blessings that we claim. These are the things which "by nature the child cannot have." He is not born to them. His natural birth admits him only into the family of Adam. And of *this* family we know what is the deserved inheritance, and what also the natural condition. By baptism, however, the child is received into *another* family—the Spiritual Household—or Church of Christ. And this great change is therefore, by a most expressive figure, described as a "new birth." It is, as it were, to be *born over again*. Our Lord, in speaking of men's admission to these spiritual blessing of Christ's kingdom, uses this very metaphor: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus supposed, like others of his nation, that all Jews were, *as such*, entitled to the privileges of the Messiah's kingdom. But—"No," says our Lord—"this is no natural birthright of any people—or class—or individual. It is a spiritual birthright and gift. 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' "‡

\* Gal. iv. 6.

† John, x. 10.

‡ John, iii. 3, 5.

The Jews were in the habit of baptizing with water all proselytes from heathenism—males and females, children and adults alike. And they were used to say of every such proselyte, received from a state of heathenism into the Covenant, “He is like a child new born.”\*

In His conversation with Nicodemus, our Lord speaks with a reference to this custom; and uses the Jewish language to represent that spiritual birth of which He afterwards appointed Christian baptism to be the “sign and sacrament.”

And in his Epistle to Titus (chap. iii. v. 5), St. Paul connects with Baptism the figurative word which is translated “regeneration,” or “new birth.” His words, precisely rendered, are, “According to His mercy He hath saved us [or rather, put us into a “state of salvation”], by means of the laver of regeneration, and the renewal of the Holy Ghost.”† You observe that the Apostle here speaks of *two* things which amongst ourselves are often spoken of as one. We talk of “a regenerate man,” and “a renewed man,” as if they meant the same. But this is to confuse two different terms; and indeed I believe that the disputes which have arisen on the subject of infant baptism have in great measure turned on the meaning of *words*. For you will often find two persons entirely agreeing as to the nature of the benefits and privileges to which a child is admitted in baptism, and only differing as to whether the introduc-

\* “Sicut parvulus jam natus.”—Lightfoot on John, iii. Comp. also Browne, Art. xxvii.

† See Ellicott’s Critical Commentary.

tion to these spiritual privileges is correctly to be called "*regeneration*," or not. They perfectly agree as to the great importance and blessing of that change which is implied in being taken out of the family of Adam, and, "by the Spirit," adopted into the chosen family of God\*—Christ's Household, the Church. And they have "faith" alike, "whereby they steadfastly believe

\* I use here the very language of Article XXVII., which speaks of "our adoption to be the sons of God *by* the Holy Ghost"—"*adoptio nostra in filios Dei per Spiritum Sanctum.*" "Ye have received" (says Paul) "the Spirit of adoption," i. e. the Spirit whose work and effect is the adoption into sonship—THE ADOPTING SPIRIT—"by which" (*as an indwelling power*—consequent on that adoption into God's family) "we cry, Abba, Father." Compare Alford, on Rom. viii. 15. Here, then, our "being made the children of God by adoption and grace"—our admission to those Covenanted blessings of which the Holy Ghost is the Dispenser—is said to be, "by" ["*per*," by the instrumentality of] "the Holy Ghost." And with this agree the words of the service—"We yield Thee hearty thanks that it hath pleased Thee to *regenerate* this infant with Thy Holy Spirit [*ex Spiritu*, and *per Spiritum*, are the original Latin forms], to receive him for Thine own child by adoption and grace, and to incorporate him into thy holy Church." These latter clauses *describe* the blessings by covenant belonging to that family into which the child is, so to speak, "*born afresh*." And this "regeneration," "reception," "adoption," "incorporation," into the family of God, are all effected BY [PER] THE SPIRIT. "FOR BY ONE SPIRIT ARE WE ALL BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY." THE GOSPEL KINGDOM—the Church of Christ on earth—is, IN EVERY DETAIL AND ACT OF ITS ADMINISTRATION among men, THE DISPENSATION OF THE SPIRIT—the "ministration of the Spirit"—ἡ διακονία τοῦ Πνεύματος—as St. Paul expressly calls it, 2 Cor. iii. 8.

the promises of God made in that sacrament,"—those promises which we have spoken of already. But some will call each child so taken into covenant "regenerate;" and some (I mean of those who do not differ as to the *substance* of the matter) have an objection to the use of this word.

Now, in the first place, it is important to bear distinctly in mind that the expression itself, "REGENERATION," or "NEW-BIRTH,"—in whatever sense it may be used, is *metaphorical*. That is to say, it is a *figure*; it is intended in Scripture and in the baptismal service to describe the change in baptism as corresponding in some way with our natural birth. And this analogy affords some guide as to the sense in which the figure is employed. For, when a child is born, we do not say that he undergoes any inward essential change of *nature* in the moment of his birth. He is already fully formed and made—"a living soul;" but, at his nativity, he enters into a new state or life—a new sphere of existence—into the world of light and motion. In like manner, a child in baptism passes into a new condition; is introduced into that new spiritual state or life which is comprehensively described as "*a state of adoption and grace.*" It is in baptism made, what it was not by nature, "a member of Christ—a child of God—and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." And this, by a very natural and significant figure, is described as "*a second birth*"—a being "born over again."

We do not mean to say of an unconscious infant, whose will and reason have not yet begun to act, whose

conscience and moral faculties are still dormant, that there is any inward change of *heart*, and *character*, and *disposition*. In this latter sense it is often said of a grown-up person whose conscience is awakened, and whose whole nature is brought under the influence of religion, that he or she is “a *regenerate* character;” and persons who use this expression take for granted that it is employed in the same sense when it is said in the baptismal service, “Seeing now that this child is regenerate.” But this is a mistake. The fact is that, correctly speaking, this inward *moral* change is rather to be expressed, according to the circumstances of each different case, by the words “renovation” or “renewal” — “conversion” — “repentance” — “sanctification,” &c. This use of words agrees better with the language of the Bible and the Prayer-Book; and also with that of our most careful and accurate writers. For *they* speak of “regeneration” as a change, or “kind of renewal of the spiritual *state* considered at large; whereas renovation seems to mean a more particular kind of renewal, namely, of the *inward frame or disposition* of the man.”\* And it is only in comparatively modern times that the words “renewal” and “regeneration” have been used,

\* Waterland. “A renewal of their *state* to God-ward” is his expression; and he adds, “the renewing also of their heart may come gradually in *with the first dawns of their reason, in such measure as they shall be capable of*; in a way to us imperceptible, but known to that Divine Spirit,” &c.

For further authority as to the meaning of the word “regeneration,” see Note appended to Lecture X.

promiscuously, to denote the inward effect produced by the Spirit on personal character; and, later still, that the expressions "regenerate" and "converted" have been employed in the same signification. And yet that these two words are not regarded as quite synonymous, we may easily show, by pointing out that, although some people do loosely use the expressions a "regenerate man" and "a converted man" as if equivalent, no one ever talks of "a converted infant." That phrase would be unmeaning on the face of it; whereas to say "this infant is regenerate" has, at the least (as no one will deny) an intelligible meaning.\*

This shows that, however sometimes promiscuously employed, the expressions are really distinct, and felt to be so. But, in controversy, the distinction is constantly lost sight of.

You will often find two persons apparently divided upon this question of "baptismal regeneration;" but if they first settle to define "regeneration" as "*an inward moral change of disposition, heart, and temper,*" then they

\* One of the Baptismal prayers asks that the infant "may receive remission of its sins by spiritual regeneration." Now, since neither our Church nor Scripture any where teaches that forgiveness of sin is to be received *by*,—by means of, or as a consequence of,—inward renewal or sanctification, this prayer alone should prove that no such moral change or conversion of heart is here intended by the word "regeneration." The prayer means that the child born *naturally* into the family of Adam, may be born *spiritually* into the family of God, so as to receive the blessing and gift sealed by God's Covenant in Christ, namely, remission of Original Sin.



will probably quite agree that such a change is not begun and finished at *any single moment* of one's life. In *this* sense, they will coincide in thinking that "regeneration" refers rather to that state—that life of spiritual growth and progress—into which our baptism is but the introduction.

And if, on the other hand, they both consent to understand the word "regeneration" not in its more modern—and now perhaps most popular—sense, but in the Prayer-Book meaning—they will not very widely differ in their opinion as to the doctrine itself. If any, indeed, say that baptism is nothing but an outward sign—an empty rite; only "an external mark of admission into the visible Church; attended with no real grace; conveying no real benefit;" conferring only, as some say, "the privileges of going to Church, reading the Bible, and hearing the Gospel" (which merely living in a Christian country would give just as much without being baptized at all); of course, I say, if any think so meanly of Christian baptism as this mode of speaking implies, such persons must of necessity differ—and differ altogether—from those who "*steadfastly believe the promises of God made in that sacrament.*" But in what language do our Catechism and Baptismal Service describe the blessing and benefit conferred in Baptism? The Catechism says, "Being by nature born in sin, the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace," made each of us "a member of Christ, a child of God, an heir of everlasting life."

In the Service we say, "We thank Thee that it hath

pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with Thy Holy Spirit—to RECEIVE HIM FOR THINE OWN CHILD BY ADOPTION AND GRACE,” &c. This is the description of the child’s new covenant relation towards God; this is the condition into which he is introduced; he was not by his first, *natural* birth “born into” this spiritual state; but God receives him into it by adoption—into this state of grace he is “regenerate,” or “born anew.”

And God intends that this change of “spiritual state,” or “*spiritual regeneration*,” should lead to an inward change of heart and character; even that very same “*moral renovation*” which all Christians agree in holding to be further necessary. It is His will that all who are baptized into the name and family of Christ should be “renewed in the spirit of their mind,” by the abiding power of the Spirit—baptized into Christ’s *nature* too. And what God promises, that will He “*for His part*” most surely keep and perform.”

It is enough for us to dedicate the child to Christ; to place it under His care; “embraced in the arms of His mercy;” assured of His blessing; and having the promise of His Spirit. We need not dispute as to the day, or hour, or moment when the Divine grace begins to operate upon the child’s soul. The Spirit works upon us, so far as we know, through our reason, our affections, our conscience, and our will. No one can tell the very moment at which all these begin to act; and, therefore, no one can say how soon the active operations of the Spirit may commence, or how.

But, indeed, these are curious and unprofitable ques-

tions. The time, the mode, and the degree in which God will to each, according to his need, fulfil His "promises made in that sacrament," are matters we may safely trust to HIM. The child—baptized into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—is made one of God's adopted family, and HE best understands the training of His children; he is brought into membership with Christ, and HE out of his "fulness" knows best how to supply every want of body and of soul; he is placed under the Spirit's guardianship, and, as a mother's watchful care brings blessing and help to her unconscious child, before it learns to recognise her smile or to return her love, that promised superintendence—that guardianship of HIM who "fillet the whole church of God" may be a blessing from the first—a greater blessing than we know.

But ours shall be a very fatal error, if we suppose that a change of spiritual *state* will be enough without a corresponding change of *nature*. We may refer *too little* to our Baptism, and to the spiritual privileges and real blessings which are engaged to us by covenant. This is the fault—the faithlessness—of some. But we may also rely *too much* on our Baptism—on the mere fact in our past history that we have been baptized; that we were once brought into a certain state,—whether we have "continued" and made advance in it, or not. And this is the error—the presumption—of others.\*

\* To quote Coleridge's expressive saying, "This would make our Baptism a down cushion to fall back and repose upon through life."

An old divine has said that a "ceremony duly instituted is a chain of gold round the neck of faith; but if, in the wish to make it co-

It is such a mistake as a parent would make if he supposed that the mere fact of a child's being born would ensure its growing up, without care or nourishment, into a healthy life; and that its *entrance upon life* would make it certain of attaining to the maturity of a full-grown man.

The Prayer of our Christmas Collect expresses comprehensively both our baptismal blessings and our corresponding, life-long, duty—"Grant that we, *being* regenerate, and *made* Thy children by adoption and grace, may *daily be renewed* by Thy Holy Spirit." If there be no such "renewal," but rather from day to day a fading and obliteration of the seal that was once set on us, and marked us as God's children, let us consider lest by our sins "*we wash away our baptism.*"\* The Apostle Paul says to the Jew, "Circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision."†

May we not use his very words, and say to the baptized Christian, "Baptism verily profiteth if thou keep the law of Christ; but if thou be a breaker of that law, thy baptism is unavailing—it profiteth thee nothing. Nay, it serves rather to condemn thee; it counts only the foremost and the beginning of those spiritual mercies that you despise and fling away."

You see, then, the twofold lesson that is conveyed in the view of Baptism which I have been pressing.

*essential*, you draw it closer and closer, it may strangle the faith it was meant to deck and designate."

\* South.

† Rom. ii. 25.

A lesson of encouragement. For a great gift is ours; and glorious promises are ours; and the assured help of God is ours, if we will use it, to save us from sin, and death, and Satan; to bring us to victory and to life everlasting. These promises are our covenanted birthright in Christ Jesus. And every good desire or better wish we ever feel is a fulfilment on God's part of His promise—a pledge of that Spirit's present help, whose aid was assured to us by God in our baptismal covenant.

A lesson, also, of warning. For it bids us "look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God."\* It cautions us to "be not slothful," but to "show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end."† For life begun is not life ended. The entrance on the struggle is not the victory. The "deed of conveyance" is not the inheritance itself. The branch, though grafted into the true vine, may wither; for Christ Himself has said it—"Abide in Me, and I in you. *If a man abide not in Me*, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."‡ The son may prove a rebel and an outcast; for God has said it. Of those whom He addresses as "My people," and, in the next verse, calls "a sinful nation—a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers,"—did He not say, "I have nourished and brought up *children*, and they have rebelled against Me?"§ The heir may be cut off, and the promised inheritance be forfeited for ever; for in God's word the warn-

\* Heb. xii. 15.

† Heb. vi. 11-12.

‡ John, xv. 4-6.

§ Isaiah, i. 2-4.

ing has been plainly written—"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." For many are called, "but few" approved and "chosen." Many, though baptized into Christ's Name, "so walk" in sin, that the Apostle tells of them, "even weeping," that they are "the enemies of the cross of Christ." To these "Christ is become of no effect." And He has given no promise that is surer than this unalterable law—that none of those who do such things "hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."\*

\* Heb. iv. 1; Phil. iii. 18.

## LECTURE X.

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### THE BAPTISMAL OFFICES—CONTINUED.

#### COVENANT OBLIGATIONS.

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GALATIANS iii. 27.

*“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ,  
have put on Christ.”*

IN the last Lecture I dwelt chiefly on the baptismal *privileges*. But, together with these, we saw that corresponding *duties* are bound on us. For baptism introduces us into a COVENANT; and a covenant implies two covenanting parties, and certain stipulations on each side.

IN the “BAPTISM OF SUCH AS ARE OF RIPER YEARS,” each adult is called on to make declared profession of his faith and repentance in coming to be baptized, and of his resolution to “keep God’s holy will and commandments,” &c. Referring to that Office, you will see that these obligations are urged in an Address to himself personally:—“Ye must faithfully, for your part, promise in the presence also of these your witnesses, and this whole congregation, that ye will,” &c.

The godfathers and godmothers do not “make answer”

for him; because he is of age and understanding to answer for himself. They are not therefore in this case called "SPONSORS," but "*chosen witnesses.*" And it is the duty of these "witnesses to *remind* the 'newly baptized' what a solemn vow, promise, and profession he has made, and call on him to use all diligence to be rightly instructed in God's holy word," &c., so as to carry out the threefold baptismal vow: (1st) to "renounce sin, the world, and the devil;" (2nd) to believe God's holy word; (3rd) "to walk in His commandments."

These are the conditions of the covenant; these are the laws of the kingdom of which he is about to be enrolled as a subject—the rules of the community into which he is to be received as a privileged member. Does he close in with these conditions? Then he must promise to obey those laws, and to conform to those rules. If he is able to answer for himself, the Church receives him on his profession, and, by the "office and ministry" of those who represent her, admits him into fellowship, and "dedicates" him to God and to His service. "Doubt not" [the Exhortation in this Service says] "that He will favourably receive this person" [or these present persons], "*truly repenting, and coming unto Him by faith.*" For it may be that he is not sincere in his professions, and then no blessing is to be looked for; like Simon Magus, he will have, although baptized, "no part nor lot in the matter." Still we must take him on his word, and hope the best. And in this case of adults, the presence of the godfathers and godmothers is required,



in order to serve, in the second place, as an attestation to the Church that the individual *is* really, so far as they can know, sincere; and a fit person, therefore, to be received into the Covenant.

But, as we saw, no such condition is expressed in the office of Infant Baptism. There, it is *unconditionally* said to those who, by an act of faith, have brought the child, and are presumed to be sincere in looking for a blessing. "Doubt not . . . that He *will* favourably receive this present infant; that He will embrace him with the arms of His mercy; that He will," &c. &c. All is said *absolutely*. No hindrance to the blessing is supposed; the present benefit is unconditionally given. There is no "charitable hypothesis" in the case of infants; though there is necessarily so in the case of adults, in which case, also, it is expressly stated.

Still, it is most important that, in all cases, baptism should be administered as a *covenant* rite. For this is the true idea of it; and one that ought never be left out of sight. This covenant-character of the ordinance should be set forth in the administration of it. In the case of infants, however, this can be done only *representatively*. And therefore certain persons are chosen to "make answer" for the child. With an exception, however. In the case of the "private baptism of infants," *no sponsors are required*. And for an obvious reason. Baptism is to be administered privately only in "great necessity," when life is in danger. The child is, under the circumstances, supposed to be dying. It is brought

therefore, to God to seal it as His own in His appointed way, before He takes it to Himself.

Here no conditions whatever—present or prospective—are attached to the “promises of God made in that sacrament,” simply because it is not expected that the child will live to fulfil them. There needs no vow nor representation of one on the child’s part, as to its after life; no promise of others to remind or to instruct; because there is apparently *no life on earth before it*. Manifestly, therefore, it is not that our Church insists upon the presence of sponsors as being essential to the sacrament itself; but only that, in the exercise of her discretionary power “to decree rites and ceremonies,”\* she has thought it expedient to make this ancient custom of answering by sponsors a part of the public administration of the ordinance, of the ceremonial *accompanying* baptism. But “the essential parts of Baptism” are stated [in the rubric at the end of “Private Baptism”] to consist in being “baptized (1st) *with water*, (2nd) *in the name of the Father*,” &c.†

“And let them not doubt” (it is said) “but that the

\* Article xx.

† There is some inconsistency between this rubric and the rubric and “questions” at the beginning of the office for receiving children. Those seem to make it (3rdly) necessary that baptism should be by “*a lawful minister*.” The fact is that the first Prayer-Book permitted lay-baptism; as also did Hermann’s Consultation, which directed, “*If any godly man be present when the infant is in extremity, let his ministry be used to baptism*.” This permission of baptism by laymen was grounded, as with the Church of Rome, on the belief that baptism was *absolutely essential* to the child’s eternal safety. But afterwards

child so baptized is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again. Yet, nevertheless, if the child which is after this sort baptized should afterwards live, it is expedient that it be brought into the Church," to be publicly *received* into the congregation of Christ's flock. And when it is thus received, sponsors are required, to make the same answers for the child, and the same promises on their own part, as in the office of Public Baptism.

You will observe, that in the questions addressed to the sponsors, and in their answers for the child, the

our Reformers, relaxing in the severity of this creed, became proportionably more strict as to the orderly and decent ministration of the rite; and desired to restrain the practice of lay-baptism. Therefore the words "lawful minister"—and the question, "by *whom*," &c., were added. Still the last rubric was retained, which asserts only the WATER [i. e. the "matter"] and the WORDS [or "form"] as "essentials." So that, on the whole, we can affirm only, from a comparison of these passages, that our Church pronounces plainly against lay-baptism as an *irregularity*; but not that it absolutely decides as to its *validity* or *invalidity*. "Fieri non debuit, factum valet." In such a case, the "hypothetical" form at the end may perhaps lawfully be used; but to this Archdeacon Sharp objects, because in the rubric "there is nothing said of the administrator or his commission, as if this were a point *not* essential, not absolutely necessary." He recommends, however, the referring of this, and all such doubtful points, to the Ordinary. But it may certainly be said, that if a clergyman refuses to give Christian burial to a child baptized by a layman, he is *pronouncing on* what our Church has left (perhaps *intentionally* left) undetermined. He is, as Blunt says, "*passing judgment* that the baptism in question was certainly *invalid*."—See Blunt's Parish Priest, Lecture X.

*singular* number is used ; whereas, in the Exhortation, they are addressed in the *plural* number, “*you*, his sureties ;” “*your* parts and duties ;” “*ye* shall call upon Him,” &c.

There is a reason for this difference. In the “answers” it is the child, not the sponsors, who is considered as speaking. “Dost *thou* renounce the devil and all his works ? &c. *I* renounce them all. Dost *thou* believe ? &c. All this *I* steadfastly believe.” And, thirdly, “Wilt *thou* be baptized in this faith ?” To which the sponsors, *who are not going, themselves, to be baptized at all*, reply, “That is *my* desire.”

For they make these professions and engagements “in the name of” the child ; and it is *he* who is regarded as the speaker. And this is not done (as some imagine) by way of a fictitious personation, superadded, as necessary to the sacrament itself ; but simply, as we have seen, to serve as an INSTRUCTIVE REPRESENTATION of the true, covenant, character of baptism.

But this “answering” for the child is not the only office of the sponsors. They have another. They are called also “sureties”\* to the Church.

Thus, in the Catechism, after stating “what is re-

\* The sponsors are sometimes also “*gossips*.” This word is spelt by Chaucer, “*gossib*,” and is derived from “*God*,” and “*sib*,” which means “*related*” or “*akin*.” The Romish Church asserts that those who stand sponsors for the same child contract a kind of “spiritual relationship” one with another, so near, that marriages between them are pronounced unlawful (i. e. except where a dispensation is obtained by *money*). Dean Trench traces the word “*gossip*” through three steps. 1st. It meant those brought by common sponsorship into affinity

quired of persons who come to be baptized;" namely, "repentance, whereby they forsake sin, and faith," &c., the objection is brought forward, "*Why then* are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?" The objector is supposed to ask, "On what right, then, if these things be 'required,' does the Church receive infants? Is it that she takes upon her to release them from these conditions; or to receive them without any security of their fulfilling them?"

The *answer* to this objection—the Church's plea—is this: "Because they promise them both (i. e. repentance and faith) by their *sureties*," &c. To whom are the godfathers and godmothers sureties? *To the Congregation.* They are securities, not to Almighty God, but to the Church. And on their guarantee the Church holds herself cleared and justified against objection, in admitting those who cannot as yet personally pledge themselves. The case is not very unlike what is done in most human societies. A candidate for admission is proposed and seconded by two persons, already members of the body; and these are understood as being to some extent "sureties" that the new member will conform to the rules of the society.

The duty which the sponsors take upon themselves as "sureties" is expressed clearly in the closing Exhor-

and near familiarity; 2ndly, it was used of those sponsors who allowed their familiar conferences to degenerate into "trivial, idle talk;" and, 3rdly, it means any who thus allow themselves "in idle talk" or "tittle-tattle." He quotes in confirmation the French "*commérage*," derived in the same way from "*commère*," "*follow-sponsor*."—*Engliah, Past and Present*, p. 186.

tation:—"It is your parts and duties to see that this infant be taught . . . what a solemn vow, promise, and profession he has here made by you." And the Exhortation then proceeds to point out the means of instruction which are provided.

To put the matter in a plain, common-sense way:—"When the child is admitted into the Christian Church, it becomes the duty—the bounden duty—of every member of God's family to look after that child; to see that he be taught the Christian religion; and that he will have fully explained to him the nature of the covenant which was sealed on his behalf in his baptism. But too often a general duty is a neglected one; according to the old proverb, "What is every one's business is no one's business;" and therefore it is that, very wisely, our Church determines that for every child that is baptized, *three* Christian persons will, *more especially*, look after that child's spiritual welfare. The parents are already answerable. No act of the Church could make them more so; and if they are real Christians, they will feel this. If, then, a child be blessed with good parents, it will have at least *five* Christians confessedly pledged to look after it; *two* of them pledged by the ties of nature, and three by an ordinance of the Church. And if a child unhappily have wicked [or careless] parents, there will still be at least *three* Christian people whose concern it will be to see that it is trained in the way in which it should go."\*

\* From a tract by the Rev. George Webster, called, *Why are Sponsors appointed?*—Hodges, Smith, and Co.

Of course, if people choose sponsors carelessly—from motives of compliment merely, or convenience, or temporal advantage, the object of all this is so far defeated. But this is the people's fault, not that of the Church. All that she can, she does, to secure that the sponsors shall be of approved Christian character. For in the twenty-ninth canon it is required that the sponsors shall be "communicants." This is in some degree a *test*; perhaps the only outward one that could with safety be imposed.\*

By the mouth of her ministers, the Church also urges very solemnly upon the sponsors the important duties which they have undertaken; does all, in fact, that with *her* lies, to make this institution the substantial blessing which it would really be if parents did their duty too.

\* The title of this Canon is "*Fathers* not to be Godfathers," &c., and the substance of the Canon also refers only to the *father*. The real reason of this was doubtless that the mother was presumed not to be sufficiently recovered, baptism being elsewhere enjoined to be on "the first or second Sunday after birth." Blunt, however, argues [Lecture X.], that "the minister, when driven to extremities from the difficulty of procuring sponsors, may without any violation of his conscience avail himself of this technical interpretation of the law, and admit the *mother* to be a sponsor, though not the *father*." The strongest point in favour of such a course is, perhaps, this, that the Church, if in a position to do so, would probably relax the rule in question; and that, while acting on the *letter* of the canon, we should be also acting in the mind and spirit of the living Church. But in the tract above referred to, it is well pointed out that some disadvantages would arise from the admission of the parents, *as the general rule*, to be sponsors; chiefly as regards the greater odium it would entail on a clergyman in cases where he might feel himself bound to refuse them.

What Christian mother would not think it a great blessing, and would not, on a dying bed, feel it a deep comfort, if two or three friends and fellow-Christians were to come forward and say, "We will look after your young child—we will see that it be taught all things that a Christian ought to know, that it be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and Christian life?" Would not Christian parents rejoice to have such an assurance for those who may be deprived of their care? And *that is just the very blessing* and the comfort which our Church provides—which parents might have if they would select aright—if they would faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons.

Nor need Christian people shrink so much as they do from undertaking the office, as if it involved duties too troublesome and burdensome to fulfil; for in these days they will find many persons to share in their responsibility, and many helps of various kinds to aid in the discharge of them. There are provided schools, classes of catechetical instruction, and so forth, to help forward the instruction of the children committed to their charge; and if the sureties take care that the child is placed in the way of these, they will be fulfilling their obligation to "*see that he be taught,*" &c. A word of friendly counsel, of Christian encouragement or admonition, they will (if they be conscientious and in earnest) feel also glad to give as "need shall require, and occasion shall be given;" but their main duty is to "provide that he may learn . . . all things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health."



After the "demands," there come four brief petitions, which for their fervour and comprehensiveness are not surpassed by any in the Prayer-Book.

And then a petition is offered, in which it is said "Sanctify" [consecrate or set apart\*] "this water to the mystical [emblematic] washing away of sin." The water, in itself, would serve only to "the putting away of the filth of the flesh;" but this outward sprinkling represents the inward purification; from the *guilt* of sin by the atoning blood of Christ; from the *defilement* of sin by the sanctifying Spirit of Christ. This is the two-fold cleansing of the fountain—ever-springing, ever-needed—that is opened in Christ Jesus, who is "of sin the double cure." And this appears symbolized in that circumstance of the Redeemer's death to which the prayer alludes in the words, "did shed out of His most precious side *both water and blood*." For you remember how very emphatically the Apostle John records that circumstance:—"One of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came thereout *blood and water*. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."†

\* By this is meant, not that the water contracts any new quality in its nature or essence, by such consecration; but only that it is sanctified or made holy in its *use*, and separated from common to sacred purposes.—Wheatley. The primitive Christians believed, as well as we do, that water [the element of water] was sanctified *in general* to a baptismal use, by our Lord's appointment of it, and (as Wheatley adds) by His own "baptism in the river Jordan."—See First Collect.

† John, xix. 34, 35.

And again in his First Epistle, "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; *not by water only, but by water and blood.*"\*

This Collect also asks, "Grant that the child now to be baptized may receive the fulness of Thy grace, and ever *remain* in the number of Thy faithful and elect children;" a prayer which shows that our Reformers did not suppose it to be absolutely certain that all admitted to that number *must*, by an irresistible and indefectible decree, "*remain*" in it.†

Then the Minister calls on the sponsors to "Name the Child;" and, addressing it for the first time by name, he says, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

This giving of a name has, of course, nothing essentially to do with baptism itself. But this is, for many reasons, the fitting time to give it. It was the custom in the Jewish Church for children to receive their names at circumcision. This you remember in the case of Isaac, of John the Baptist, and of our blessed Lord Himself. We find, also, that when any one was admitted into some new relation—some special covenant with Jehovah—a new name usually marked this change. Under such circumstances the name of Abram was changed to

\* 1 John, v. 6.

† It is this notion of the absolute irresistibility and indefectibility of Divine grace which, I feel more and more convinced, lies at the root of all the objections popularly brought against our Baptismal Service. The objections must, however, be carried still further back, against the Apostles and their writings.

Abraham; Sarai to Sarah; Jacob [the supplanter] to Israel [the Prince of God]; &c. And even among the Greeks and Romans it was customary for a slave, when emancipated, to assume a new name, in token of his having entered on a *new, free life*. In like manner, we give to the child at baptism his "CHRISTIAN NAME;" i. e. the name which marks our relation to God as our heavenly Father, given on admission into His spiritual family; just as the surname belongs to us by birth, and denotes our relationship to our earthly parents and to the family of man.\* Then the presbyter or deacon (as the case may be) says, "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock;" and, by a very simple and expressive symbol, signs him "with the sign of the cross; in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified,† and manfully to fight under His banner," &c.

\* In the Catechism the first question is, "What is thy name? Answer, N. or M." The inverted order of these letters suggests the explanation of them as the initials of "Nomen aut Nomina," i. e. "Name or Names;" (all the names except the surname, whether one or more, as the case may be, being regarded as "THE CHRISTIAN NAME"). These words were probably abbreviated thus: "N. or NN." [plural—like pp. for pages], whence the plural abbreviation came, by mistake, to be written M. instead of NN.

† The thirtieth Canon, referred to in the note at the end of the service, "to take away all scruple concerning the use" of this sign, states, 1st, "that the sign of the cross is no part of the substance of the Sacrament," "for the infant is fully and perfectly baptized" by the water and the words, "I baptize," &c.; 2nd, that "By virtue of Baptism, before it be signed with the sign of the cross, it is received into the congre-

Then shall the priest [or the minister] say, "SEEKING now, dearly beloved, that this child is regenerate"—admitted or "born into" the spiritual family of God's adoption—"and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits; and with one accord make our prayers unto Him that this child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning." Then follows, naturally, the LORD'S PRAYER, in which we, by the Spirit of adoption, cry, "*Our Father*;" and then a form beginning with a hearty and unreserved thanksgiving, "That it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant," &c.

But is all, then, done? is all secure for ever? We have seen already that our baptism is meant to *represent* to us our whole "profession." In serving as the entrance upon the Christian life, it teaches also what sort that life should be. St. Paul says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with Him, by baptism into death: that, like as Christ was raised up

gation as a perfect member thereof, and not by any power ascribed unto the sign." Lastly, being "a lawful outward ceremony and honourable badge, purged from all Popish superstition"—the Canon says, "We hold it the part of every private man, both minister and other, reverently to retain the true use of it prescribed by public authority; considering that things, of themselves indifferent, do in some sort alter their natures, when they are either commanded or forbidden by a lawful magistrate, and may not be omitted at every man's pleasure, contrary to the law when they be commanded, nor used when they are prohibited."

from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”\*

He refers here to that particular mode of baptism which was the rule in those warm climates; namely, by immersion; and speaks of that as symbolizing fitly the meaning of baptism into Christ. We enter, then, into communion with Christ Jesus in His death and life. We are brought near to Him who died for our sins, and rose again that we might live. The “immersion” under the waters, and the “rising again” from them, was an appropriate and striking representation also of the engagement made on our part—of our life-long dying and life-long rising. It is not only our introduction to the Christian life, but a prefigurement of what that life should be. It teaches us what our profession is; namely (in the words of the last Exhortation), “to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that as He died and rose again for us, so should we who are baptized die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness, continually mortifying [slaying] all our evil and corrupt affections, and *daily* proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.” The Apostle appears to say, “we go down into those waters, as a sort of burial with Christ; under those waters, *as in a grave*, we profess to leave our sins: and we rise, pledged to walk thenceforth in newness of life.” By covenant, we become in baptism “dead unto sin;” part company with, renounce it; profess to put such a separation between us and it as death puts.

\* Rom. vi. 3, 4-

Not merely are we, in being taken into God's Family and Household, made, so far, "partakers of the death" of Christ—partakers, so far in the benefits of that atonement by which He has brought us into a state of reconciliation—but we are bound also, on our part, to put to death in ourselves that sin for which He died—"to count ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." And thus the prayer goes on to say,—“And humbly we beseech Thee to grant that he, being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness [i. e. by dedication and profession]; and *being* buried with Christ in His death, *may* crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin [i. e. *may fulfil and carry out* these professions]; and that as he *is made* partaker of the death of Thy Son, he *may also be* partaker of His resurrection, so that finally . . . he may be an inheritor,” &c.

The prayer agrees exactly with the tone and very language of the Apostle Paul. In the entire of that chapter above referred to\* he assumes that Christians *are* what they profess to be; he grounds his appeals to them on *their declared professions*.

And this he often does. Thus, for example, he says to the Galatians,—“As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, *have put on Christ*,” for so indeed they had professed to do. While in another place he writes, to *Christians also*, urging them to do in effect and practice what they had, equally, professed,—“But *put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*.”† In the same manner he calls

\* Romans, vi.

† Romans, xiii. 14.

on the Corinthians—"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be (in fact and in character) a new lump, as ye *are* unleavened [*are*, i. e. by covenant and profession]." He writes to the Colossians,—“For ye *are dead* (by profession and engagement) and your life is hid with Christ in God. *Mortify* [*put to death*], *therefore*, your members.”\* And again,—“Ye *have put* off the old man; and *have put* on the new man;” though, in the next verse but one, he calls on them to “*put* on, as the elect of God,” those very Christian virtues to which they were pledged. On the same principle, somewhat differently applied, the Apostle John says,—“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;” i. e. sin is inconsistent with his profession—with that character which belongs to him as a “regenerate man.” And thus it might fairly be said, after a common, understood way of speaking, that if he does live in sin, he is not, *in the best sense*, “born of God.” He is untrue to the character he ought to bear as such; and therefore does not, in fact, *deserve* the name. St. Paul says,—“He is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart,” &c. In a like sense we often say, “He who could act so or so is *no man*;” although it is because he *is* a man, and *not* a brute, that we condemn him. So we may say in one sense he “is *not* a Christian;” “he is not a child of God;” “he is not a [*truly, inwardly*] regenerate man,” who does such or such things. Although

\* Col. iii. 3, 4, 9, 10, 12. Compare also Rom. vi. 18, 22, 29; Gal. v. 25.

we blame him, and know that God also holds him doubly guilty—more punishable than a heathen—precisely for this reason, that he *is*, by profession, a Christian; *is* a child of God; and *was*, in baptism, born into a state which he has not continued in and kept. Nothing in Scripture seems plainer, in short, than that all Christians—all baptized persons—are addressed as “sons of God”—“Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” Nothing, also, plainer than the description of the true filial character that all who “*walk as children*” ought to bear. “And every man that hath this hope in Him (i. e. in Christ) purifieth himself, even as He is pure.”\* And nothing, lastly, can be plainer than the statement of St. Paul, that the true—the real, living, lasting Sonship—belongs only to those in whom the Spirit of the Son abides and lives. “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, *they* are the sons of God.”

Let us lay to heart *all* these statements; taking in faithfully the whole counsel of God. And then we shall neither disparage on the one hand, nor misapply upon the other, the blessings and benefits assured to us in baptism. Then we shall neither *disbelieve* nor yet *presume upon* “the promises of God made in that sacrament.”

For here is the practical issue of what we have been saying—“the sum of the whole matter.”

Let us take heart and hope from the sure mercy and gracious promises of God. He has called us to a life-long struggle; but He is ready and willing to aid us with an

\* 1 John, iii. 2, 3.



everlasting strength—"to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." For this He has covenanted to do for Jesus' sake.

Yet, let us not blindly, thoughtlessly, trust, as regards our present or eternal safety, to any fact in our past history. On this our safety hangs—now and for the future—whether God's Holy Spirit "*abideth in us*" or not. This is the point which our lives and hearts must witness—whether Christ "*dwelleth in our hearts by faith*," that so we may be "rooted and grounded in love," and be found ever "growing up unto Him in all things." Whatever be our differences, we shall agree in asking that this life, this growth, this quickening presence may be ours; and all the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto God's glory, ours too. And for the sons and daughters of our Church, let us ask that they may also grow up thus before Him; that as many as are planted in this house of the Lord may flourish in the courts of the House of our God—even that House which is "eternal in the Heavens."

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NOTE G.

ON "REGENERATION."

"THE Greeks and Latin fathers make the effect of baptism to be a 'regeneration' or a 'generation to a spiritual life;' but the turning to God after a course of sin they call 'penitence,' or 'conversion to God.' The most eminent divines of the Reformation use these words in the ancient sense. Peter Martyr uses 'regeneration' for baptism

and calls the turning to God after a state of sin, the 'conversion and change of a man.' Calvin, where he designs to speak with exactness, does the same. In the sermons and books written about the beginning of the late civil wars [the Rebellion] 'regeneration,' for 'repentance' or 'conversion' became a very fashionable word. And so some divines [the Puritans] at the Restoration, found fault with the Prayer-Book for using the word 'regeneration' *in the ancient sense, which it had kept for 1600 years*, in opposition to theirs, which was hardly sixty years old."—Dr. Nicholls. See Dr. Hood's Church Dictionary, Art. REGENERATE.

Admission into the Church of God—implying a full reception to all its covenanted privileges—is constantly spoken of in Scripture under the figure of "birth" in reference to nations as well as individuals. Thus the Lord says of those first called or "born into" His Church of old—"Israel is my son; my firstborn; and I say unto thee, let my son go that he may serve me; and if thou refuse . . . behold I will slay thy son, even thy first-born." Exod. iv. 22, 23. Thus too Isaiah says—in a passage to which our Lord seems to refer in his conversation with Nicodemus (see John, iii. and compare John, i. 12, 13)—"Who hath heard such a thing? or who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be *born* at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth children."

The prophet is predicting the calling and "new birth" of the Gentiles into the Church of God. Compare also Isaiah, liv. 1-3, and Galatians, iv.

Speaking of this word "Regeneration" as connected with Infant Baptism, DR. WATERLAND thus explains it,—“They stipulate, and the Holy Spirit translates them out of a *state* of nature into a *state* of grace, favour, and acceptance.”

“Baptized” and “regenerate” are used as equivalent expressions in Article IX.:—“There is no condemnation for them that believe and are *baptized*”—where the Latin is, “that are *regenerate* and believe”—[“renatis et credentibus.”]

ARCHBISHOP SUMNER defines regeneration as consisting in being

"brought into a state of reconciliation; admitted to privileges" which Christians are "called on to improve." He further says,—*"The term ('regeneration') has neither been accurately defined in Scripture, nor restricted to one sense in the common language of divines."*—See Sumner on Apostolical Preaching, chap. iv. In a note (p. 178) he quotes "the valuable authority of BISHOP RYDER," who says,—*"The question of regeneration, as far as it regards the use of the term, is in my opinion satisfactorily determined by the Articles and Offices of our Church, and by the meaning uniformly annexed to it in the four first centuries of the Christian Era. I would therefore wish generally to restrict the term to the baptismal privileges; and considering them as comprehending not only an external admission into the visible Church, not only a covenanted title to the pardon and grace of the Gospel, but even a degree of spiritual aid vouchsafed, and ready to offer itself to our acceptance or rejection. At the dawn of reason I would recommend a reference to these privileges in our discourses, as talents which the hearers should have so improved as to bear interest, as seed which should have sprung up and produced faith."*—Bishop Ryder's Primary Charge, p. 17.

"Those duly baptized are received into the number of God's adopted children, and have the promise of forgiveness of sins, and as it were *the treasury thrown open to them of divine grace*; through which, if they only avail themselves of it, though not otherwise, they will attain final salvation . . . This placing of a person in a different condition from that in which he was originally born may not inaptly be designated, as it appears to be by our Reformers, by the term 'regeneration' or 'new birth.'"—Archbishop Whately on Sacraments, pp. 44, 46; see also pp. 38 and 50-54.

The late REV. CHARLES SIMEON, of Cambridge, says,—*"IN THE baptismal service we thank God for having regenerated the baptized infant by his Holy Spirit. Now from hence it appears that, in the opinion of our Reformers, regeneration and remission of sins did accompany baptism. But in what sense did they hold this sentiment? Did they maintain that there was no need for the seed then sown in the hearts of the baptized person to grow up and to bring forth fruit;*

or that he could be saved in any other way than by a progressive renovation of his soul after the divine image? Had they asserted any such doctrine as that, it would have been impossible for any enlightened person to concur with them. But nothing can be conceived more repugnant to their sentiments than such an idea as this; so far from harbouring such a thought, they have, and that too in this very prayer, taught us to look to God for that *total change*, both of heart and life, which *long since their days has begun to be expressed by the term regeneration*. After thanking God for regenerating the infant by His *Holy Spirit*, we are taught to pray, 'that he being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, may crucify the old man; and utterly abolish the whole body of sin;' and then declaring the total change to be the necessary mean of his obtaining salvation, we add, 'so that finally, with the residue of thy holy Church, he *may* be an inheritor of thine everlasting kingdom.' Is there (I would ask) any person that can require more? . . . . . If we appeal, as we ought to do, to the Holy Scriptures, they certainly do, in a *very remarkable way*, accord with the expressions in our Liturgy. St. Paul says,—'By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body,' &c. . . . . Again, speaking of the whole nation of Israel, infants as well as adults, he says, 'They were all baptized unto Moses . . . and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and *that rock was CHRIST*.\* Yet, behold, in the very next verse he tells us that, 'with many of them God was displeased, and overthrew them in the wilderness.' In another place he speaks yet more strongly still:—'As many of you,' says he, 'as are baptized unto CHRIST, have put on CHRIST.' Here we see what is meant by the same expression as that before mentioned, of the Israelites being 'baptized unto Moses;' it includes all that had been *initiated into* his religion by the rite of baptism; and of them universally does the Apostle say, '*they have put on Christ*.'

"Now, I ask, have not the persons who scruple the use of that

\* 1 Cor. x. 1-4.

prayer in the baptismal service equal reason to scruple the use of these different expressions?"—Simeon's Works, vol. ii. p. 256.

Further on, Mr. Simeon adds,—“Let me then speak the truth before God: though I am no Arminian, *I do think the refinements of Calvin have done great harm in the Church; they have driven multitudes from the plain and popular way of speaking used by the inspired writers*, and have made them unreasonably and unscripturally squeamish in their modes of expression; and I conceive that the less addicted any person is to systematic accuracy, the more he will accord with the inspired writers, and the more he will approve the views of our Reformers.”

ARCHBISHOP SUMNER represents the doctrine in a Scriptural and very practical light in the following passage:—“Though in many cases it may be impossible, as was formerly acknowledged, for those who have been placed in covenant with God by baptism, to state at what time and by what process the truths of the Gospel became an active principle in the mind, still it is undeniable that in all who attain the age of reason they must become so, or the covenant is made void: and it is a definite and intelligible question whether they have actually taken this hold or no. . . . . Is the heart possessed of a sincere conviction of its own sinfulness and need of a Saviour? does it manifest its dependance on the Holy Spirit by an habitual intercourse with God through prayer? does it feel a practical sense of the great business of this life, as a probation and preparation for eternity? These are infallible characters of faith; and though they will be found in different degrees in different individuals, no one should be satisfied with himself, and no one should suffer his congregation to be satisfied, till he can trace these characters in the heart. But if such a frame of mind is indispensable to a Christian's reasonable hope, it is evident that a preacher can in no wise take it for granted that it exists in his hearers as the necessary and gratuitous consequence of baptism, but must require of all who have the privilege of baptism that they strive to attain it; that, being *regenerate* in condition, they be also *renewed* in nature, and constantly examine themselves whether they have this proof within them that they are born of the *Spirit* as well as of *water*,

and can make the 'answer of a good conscience towards God.'"—Sumner's Apostolical Preaching, chap. vii.

In the *Aids to Reflection* there is much on this subject that is very good. Alluding to the danger of undue reliance on baptismal privileges, it is observed :—"Should we not stare to hear it affirmed that a caterpillar is a butterfly, or a little dry brown seed a cluster of gorgeous blossoms, finer than Solomon in all his glory? Yet there is less difference betwixt the slow dull worm and the gay glancing insect, betwixt the dry seed and the glowing flower, than between a soul that is but *baptismally regenerate*, and that which has been really, internally, *transformed by the renewing of the mind*,—changed from glory to glory by the power of the Spirit, while it beholds with open face the glory of the Lord! For the caterpillar will surely become a butterfly; and, out of the seed, stem, leaf, and blossom will surely arise, if outward conditions enable each to run its natural career. But, alas! how many a soul has all the means and conditions of being evolved into an immortal spirit, clad with light as with a garment, and with robes of righteousness, whereof the glories of Solomon's attire were but the faintest type, yet *will* not rise up out of its low grovelling estate,—its poverty and dryness!"—Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*, vol. ii. p. 521:

## LECTURE XI.

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### THE ORDER OF CONFIRMATION.

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Joshua, xxiv. 22.

*“ And Joshua said unto the people, ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord to serve Him. And they said, We are witnesses.”*

IN the last Lecture I spoke of Baptism as being essentially a COVENANT. And the appointment in our Service, that the professions “required of those who come to be baptized” shall be made by certain parties speaking in the name of the child, serves as an *instructive representation* of this truth. It forcibly stamps the covenant-idea on the administration of the ordinance.

I reminded you also that these sponsors become “sureties” to the congregation (i. e. the Church), that the new member shall be instructed as to the Christian vow, promise, and profession made. For it was never meant that Baptism should stand alone ; a solitary fact in our history ; a bare rite, introductory to nothing ; or that the baptized could be expected to live godly lives, if left un-

taught, and allowed, though nominally Christians, to grow up like heathens. That would have been to leave out of sight one part of our Lord's commission; that part where—after bidding His Apostles “Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them,” &c., He adds,—“*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*”

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM must be united with, or followed up by, CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION. Wherever the second part of our Saviour's charge is neglected, we cannot look for a blessing on the mere formal fulfilment of the first part.

We should not expect a harvest—nor think indeed that we had *sowed* the seed at all—if we had merely scattered it upon the way-side, to be “trodden under foot” or “devoured by the fowls of the air.”

But it is manifestly supposed in the Baptismal Service—and earnestly also impressed in it—that those who bring the child to be baptized will see that it receives a Christian education. And, partly to secure a public attestation to the fact that such an education has been given, and that the “sureties” have fulfilled their pledges, they are required, in the short Address at the close of the Baptismal Service, to “take care that this child be brought to the bishop to be CONFIRMED by him, so soon as he” shall have learnt those things that a “Christian ought to know.” As a help towards this, the Church provides—and recommends in this Address—a Catechism or (as it is otherwise called) a form of “instruction to be learnt of every person before he come to be



confirmed." This form contains the *ground-work* of sound, Scriptural instruction; and sets before us very comprehensively and yet very simply, 1stly, our Christian privileges; 2ndly, our Christian duties; and, 3rdly, those divine helps and means of grace through which God strengthens us to keep the vows of our covenant.

This Catechism is learnt by each child "*before* he is confirmed;" and there this question is put to him repeatedly while still a child,—“Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and to do as they (your god-fathers and godmothers) have promised for thee?” And the child answers, “Yes, verily; and by God’s help so I will.” Children, and others too, make a confusion sometimes here. They think that they are “bound to believe and to do” these things *because* their sponsors promised for them. But, on the contrary [one should explain it to a child], “Your sponsors made these professions and engagements for you, because you could not be received into a covenant with God without being in fact thus bound. Nay, more; even if you had not been baptized at all, your very living in a Christian country—your very knowledge that there is a God, and that He has given a revelation and a law to man, would bind you to ‘believe and do’ as He commands. You could not—even if you would—escape this obligation. But God has done for you this great thing, and shown to you this mercy; He has brought you into a state in which He has assured to you such spiritual helps as will assist you to fulfil your obligations. These duties are not imposed upon you by your sponsors; but they are laid on you by

the very circumstances of your being God's creatures, and having received the knowledge of the Gospel. In short, these things are not right *because your sponsors undertook them* for you, but rather, *they undertook them because they were right*—right in themselves, and therefore in themselves absolutely binding.

“You cannot forget the covenant duties without foregoing the covenanted blessings. For, *not* to renounce sin—*not* to believe—*not* to obey God—is, to renounce the blessings of membership with Christ, of sonship toward God, and of the promised inheritance ‘of the kingdom of heaven.’”

“Dost not thou think that thou art bound?” “*Yes, verily;*”—even when children we replied: “*and by God's help so I will;*” and every time that, even then, we prayed to God as “Our Father,” every time we asked the Spirit's help, and thought of our promised home in heaven, it was as *Children of the Covenant* which God had made with us in his dear Son, that we did these things. And so, even in childhood, every Christian prayer and hope and effort was an acknowledgment, so far, of our baptismal covenant.

But it is wisely ordered in our Church, that there should be a more distinct and open recognition of our covenant engagements; a public renewal of them, like that which the people of Israel made when Joshua said to them,—“Ye are witnesses against yourselves that *ye have chosen you* the Lord to serve him. And they said, *we are witnesses.*”

And this more set and solemn renewal of our baptis-

mal covenant is appointed to be made as soon as we have come to years of discretion ; at the very time when our age and circumstances put it upon us to choose for ourselves what Master we shall serve.

For then is commonly the turning-point of our life. We had been long before enlisted as Christ's soldiers ; but now we are about to enter in good earnest on the " world's broad field of battle." And so, just at the entrance upon life's active duties, when the temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh are coming round us most, the Church, as it were, calls on us to pause and think,—to choose and to prepare ; just at the threshold she stops us, and puts to us the question, " Will you be true to your baptismal covenant ? Will you go forth on life 'in the strength of the Lord God ?' Then come, *confirm* the vows which are upon you ; and ask of God to '*confirm* and strengthen' you, in grace, to keep them. Ask Him, who only can 'confirm you to the end,' to 'establish the thing which He has wrought in you.'"

The ordinance of CONFIRMATION is indeed so plainly right and reasonable, that even if it had no direct authority in Scripture, most persons would allow it to be fully sanctioned by the Apostle's rule,—“ Let all things be done unto edifying.”\* It very manifestly is a rite that serves (as one of the Prayer-Book prefaces says) “ to a decent order and godly discipline ; apt to stir the mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God ;” and helping, in a very peculiar degree, to build up Christians

\* 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

—the youthful members of Christ's body—"in their most holy faith."

It is in part derived from a custom of the Jewish Church, with which, at least, it seems to correspond.

It was usual for Jewish children to be brought, at the age of twelve or thirteen, to the House of God, in order to be publicly examined. Teachers, or "catechists," were appointed in connexion with each synagogue, to prepare them by previous instruction. And those who were approved at the examination were declared to be thenceforward "Children of the Law or Precept." With this usage "the child Jesus" complied, when He went up with His parents to Jerusalem, and sat under the teaching of "the doctors."\*

This was regarded among the Jews as a renewal and *confirmation* of the covenant into which they had been received as infants; as an attestation, also, to the fitness of the individual to be thenceforth regarded as standing in full and voluntary membership.

But in the Acts of the Apostles, and from the Epistles also, we learn that a rite resembling our Confirmation, though not in all respects alike, was administered in the Christian Church, and by the Apostles.

In the eighth chapter of the Acts we read of the Apostles Peter and John being sent down to the Samaritans whom Philip had baptized; and that these Apostles, "when they were come down, prayed for them," and "laid their hands on them," "that they might re-

\* Luke, ii. 40-46.

ceive the Holy Ghost." Again, in Acts, xix., we hear of the Ephesians, upon whom, after they had received Christian baptism, "Paul laid his hands, and the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied." In both these cases, and in others that we read of, this imposition of hands was accompanied by the bestowal of miraculous gifts.

These outward gifts of miracle were conferred either (1), *immediately* by God (as on the day of Pentecost, and on Cornelius and his other Gentile friends); or else (2), through the medium of the Apostles—through their "*laying on of hands*." This latter was the ordinary method.

The bestowal of these gifts served partly as a testimony to the authority of the Apostles: but they were also an assurance to the first Christians, that the Church of Christ was truly the "Temple of the Holy Ghost."

They were "a pledge to the young and inexperienced Church, that that unseen Spirit had indeed taken up His abode with them and within them."\*

But those extraordinary gifts were not to be continued always. Just as the pillar of fire and the flame of the Shechinah remained visible to the Israelites till a belief in the Divine presence had been familiarized into an habitual impression; so those external, miraculous evidences were granted for a time, to show that God had indeed come down to dwell with His people; "to the end

\* Bishop Hind's History of Christianity, Part ii. ch. i.

that they might be established in the faith.”\* Perhaps, however, these miraculous gifts are rather to be regarded as *signs of confirmation*, than as the confirmation itself; and better gifts than these were, doubtless, given at the same time; even such gifts as God bestows upon His people still, in answer to believing prayer.

Our Lord had said, “These signs shall follow them that believe; in My Name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”†

But “greater works than these” we do in our Saviour’s name, when by His power we cast out the presence of the Evil One from our hearts; when we are “kept unspotted” from the world we live in; when “deadly” temptations leave us unharmed; when we recover from the death of trespasses and sin, or by the grace of God are made the instruments of raising others from that death; when our hearts and lips are opened to show forth His praise, and we have put into our mouths “new songs of thanksgiving to our God.” And surely they who have this “witness in themselves” may well believe, like the apostles, that the Lord is “working with them, and confirming the word” of promise “with *signs* following.”‡ These “gifts” or “graces” of the Spirit are

\* Romans, i. 11. For this cause the Apostle Paul says, “I long to see you, *that I may impart to you some spiritual gift*,” &c.

† Mark, xvi. 17, 18.

‡ Mark, xvi. 20.

permanent; though the external manifestations which at the first attested their bestowal were but occasional and temporary.

Therefore the Christian Church did wisely in retaining the rite of Confirmation itself, even when the gifts of miracle had been withdrawn. And our own Church has so ordered its administration, as to make it in every respect instructive and profitable. The service is brief and very simple. It opens with an Address (which was originally printed as a rubric) explaining the meaning and objects of the rite. This may be read by any "minister appointed." But the Bishop alone *confirms*. It is so appointed in our Church, because it has been judged that, in following an Apostolic ordinance, it is the surest and best course to keep as closely as possible to the Apostolic model, and because also it helps to make this rite more solemn and impressive when it is administered by one who is chief Pastor and Overseer in Christ's flock.\*

The Bishop then puts to all and each this question,

"Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at

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\* "For the greater solemnity and awe of the action."—Bishop Burnet, *Article xxv*. In the Romish Church there have been some differences of practice on this point. Pope Gregory the Great, e. g. permitted the *Presbyter* to confirm in the Bishop's absence. Their modern rule, however, is the same as ours. In the Greek Church the priest confirms as well as the bishop; and the rite is administered immediately after baptism.

your baptism ; ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which your godfathers and godmothers then undertook for you ?”

And every one shall audibly answer, “ I do.”

They are few words, soon spoken, but implying much ; implying far more than we can do of ourselves. And so at once we are directed to Him of whom cometh our only help. The Bishop says in David’s words,\* “ *Our help is in the name of the LORD :*” and with the same thought that David there and often turns to, as an encouragement, the candidates for confirmation answer, “ *Who hath made heaven and earth.*” Next follow two more verses.† And then a prayer is offered by the Bishop, in which he thankfully refers to those blessings of which we have already spoken ; and asks that God would “ strengthen these His servants with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them” His “ manifold gifts of grace.” It had been asked for them at baptism, that they might “ receive the *fulness* of God’s grace”—and here we seek the “ sevenfold ” gifts ; that is to say, the “ *perfect fulness* ” of the Spirit ; using nearly the words of Isaiah.†

Then the Bishop lays his hand “ upon the head of every one severally,” saying, as he does so, “ *Defend, O Lord, this Thy child [or servant] with Thy heavenly grace, that he may continue Thine for ever ; and daily increase in*

\* Psalm cxxiv. 8.

† From Psalms cxliii. and ci.

‡ Isaiah, xi. 2, 3.



*Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto Thine everlasting kingdom."*

This laying on of hands is a very ancient and expressive form, used in benediction and prayer. Thus, for example, Jacob laid his hands on Ephraim and Manasseh in blessing them.\* The imposition of hands is not intended as of itself conveying the blessing; but it is a simple and natural act of *designation*; marking out the individual for whom the blessing is besought of God.

When all have been confirmed, it is customary for the Bishop to address them personally at this part of the Service; setting before them once again the duties, the difficulties, and the encouragements of the Christian life. And then—after those solemn words, "*The Lord be with you:*" "*And with thy Spirit;*"—"all, kneeling down," unite in the LORD'S PRAYER, the special petition of the Christian family. The COLLECT that follows shows, further, what is intended and expressed in the laying on of hands—"We make our humble supplications unto Thee for these Thy servants, upon whom (after the example of Thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands, to CERTIFY THEM (BY THIS SIGN)† OF THY FAVOUR and gra-

\* Gen. xlviii.

† Not, however, in the peculiar *sacramental* sense; i. e. not as the "outward sign of an inward grace, *ordained by Christ Himself* as a *means whereby we receive* the same;" for Confirmation is one of those rites which Article xxv. declares "have not like nature of sacraments with Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, *for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.*"

cious goodness toward them." And the blessing which in this expressive act is "*signified and represented*," is then specified: "Let **THY FATHERLY HAND**, we beseech Thee, **EVER BE OVER THEM**; let Thy Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of Thy holy word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life."

Then there is a **PRAYER** that God would "direct, sanctify, and govern" the "hearts" and "bodies" that have been now again solemnly dedicated to Him, and committed to His keeping; that he would preserve them "here and ever." And after that, the service of Confirmation concludes with the **BLESSING**.

But at the end you see a rubric, which orders that "*there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed*." And this suggests another and a most important view of Confirmation; namely, as an **INTRODUCTION TO THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**.

Confirmation is, in short, a connecting link between the two Sacraments. It is a renewal and sealing of our baptismal covenant; and an introduction to that second Sacrament in which we claim full membership with Christ and with His Church.

In the "Ministration of Baptism to such as are of riper years," it is directed that "every person thus baptized" shall also be confirmed "as soon as conveniently may be."

It might appear to some that, when an adult has already made a public profession in Baptism, the ordi-

nance of Confirmation is not so necessary nor so applicable.

But the office of Adult Baptism was added (as the preface to the Prayer-Book mentions) not only on account of the neglect of Baptism under the Commonwealth, but also as being "*always useful for the baptizing of natives in our plantations and others converted to the faith.*"

And in such cases, it would often happen that a person might be found qualified in the elements of Christian knowledge, so far as to be admitted to Baptism, and yet might need fuller instruction, and yet further Christian training, before he could be judged capable of making an intelligent and profitable use of the other sacrament. Here, therefore, Confirmation—coming after due *instruction* and *probation*—would attest publicly the fitness, in point of knowledge and steady Christian character, of the newly-baptized, to be admitted also to the holy ordinance of the Lord's Supper; and it serves, in the same manner, as a formal *introduction* to it. Besides, it is a time of special public prayer for the baptized, that God would confirm them in their faith, and "increase in them" His "manifold gifts of grace." What makes it clear, however, that Confirmation is, in all cases, regarded as a connecting *link* between the sacraments—a ratifying of the one, an introduction to the other—is the circumstance, that in the Catechism "to be learned of every person before he is confirmed," an *explanation of both Sacraments is given.*

And this important view of Confirmation is more prominently set forward wherever (as in this diocese, and

in some others) the Holy Communion is administered to the confirmed upon the day of Confirmation. This gives additional solemnity to the occasion, and to the previous preparation for it.

And, in truth, the same preparation is necessary for the one Ordinance as for the other. For, "What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper?"

*"To examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of His death; and to be in charity with all men."*

And is not this self-examination; is not this very state of mind and feeling required of those who come to be confirmed?

If I found any hesitating about Confirmation, because he is expected to receive the Holy Communion on the day he is confirmed, I should say this to him: "When you are asked, 'Do you renew and confirm the solemn promise and vow of your baptism?' are you prepared with a true heart to answer, 'I do?'"

"If you are not—*then do not come to be confirmed*; do not mock God with words you do not mean.

"If you are—then, why not seek, in every way; why not seek in *this*, Christ's specially appointed way—that life and strength by which He will confirm—yea, 'establish, strengthen, settle,' you to keep your 'solemn promise?'"

And you who have been confirmed, and often since have come into this House, and done many another out-

ward Christian act, as professing members of the covenant of Christ, are *you* not very inconsistent, if you habitually neglect that holy Ordinance to which you once sought introduction?

You claim the privileges of the covenant; in coming here you prefer that claim, and think that you establish it; you know, also, that privileges and duties go together; then, if you really wish God to *confirm* to you the *blessings* you desire, why do you not ask Him to *confirm* you in the *duties* by which you know that you are bound? He heard your promise of self-dedication. He heard and registered your vow at Confirmation.

You have "avouched the Lord to be your God." You have deliberately said, "I will keep the commandments of my God. I have sworn and am steadfastly purposed to keep Thy righteous judgments."\* And "ye are witnesses against yourselves." Do not be counted among those who shall be found to have "transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant."†

*You*, who have really tried, and sought help most, know best how much you need God's Holy Spirit to be "ever with you." Those whom you promised at Baptism and Confirmation to "renounce" *have not renounced* you. Your "enemies live, and are mighty."

The world spreads its snares; the flesh lusteth against the Spirit; the devil hunts you as a prey, that *he* may have you, and not Christ.

The sins you have renounced return; the truths that

\* Psalm cxix. 106. (P.-B).

† Isaiah, xxiv. 5.

you believe seem often as if fading or forgotten ; the good that you have pledged yourself to do, you grow faint-hearted and weary in doing.

The work that you have entered on is a "*warfare*." But you *have* entered on it ; you cannot and you would not "turn back again to your own way." "And now, Lord, what is our hope ? *Truly our hope is even in THEE.*" Knowing the work, and your own helplessness to do it, rejoice because your helper is "THE ALMIGHTY ;" because your Master is He that "giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might increaseth strength."

He has seen many a professed disciple "go back, and walk no more with Him."\* And when He turns to you with that appeal that touched the Twelve, "*Wilt thou also go away?*" let it be yours to answer, "'Lord, to whom shall I go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' Thou hast the power to 'hold me up' and save me. To Thee I have offered myself—my soul and body—to be 'a living, holy sacrifice.' Into Thy hands, therefore, I commit them : keep that which I commit to THEE, against that day. Thou Lord, art with the Father ; but I am 'in the world.' Be with me, then, to 'keep me from the evil.' Send out Thy light and truth, that they may lead me. *Confirm me to the end, that in 'THAT DAY' I may see the good of Thy chosen ; that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, and give thanks with Thine inheritance.*"†

\* John, vi. 66-69.

† Psalm cvi. 5.

## LECTURE XII.\*

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### BEING NOTES ON THE FORM OF SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY.

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I. THIS Office will be best understood if we remember that it contemplates Marriage under a twofold aspect:—

1st, Matrimony is, generally, “an honourable, *holy estate*, instituted of God.”

2nd, The agreement between two parties to enter into that “estate” is, further, a *civil contract*.

Some definite form of contract has been required in almost every nation; and in our own country is absolutely necessary to confer legitimacy, and the rights of property connected with it, on the offspring. So far as these civil privileges go, the State has power to legalize any form. Whether that power be always rightly or wisely exercised is another question. Still, those who are coupled together as the “Laws of the Realm allow,” are “Man and Wife together,” however defective, in a *Christian* point of view, their mode of union.

\* This Lecture was not delivered.

But, on the other hand, though marriage before a magistrate or registrar be held and deemed a legal and valid matrimonial contract, none but the very careless, ignorant, and irreligious, will deliberately choose to be united in this way. For, surely, in entering that "holy estate"—which, the service reminds us, "*is not by any to be enterprised nor taken in hand unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God*"—all those who feel the need and value of God's "spiritual benediction and grace" will ask His blessing on the step. They will choose rather that religious form where, "in the sight of God and in the face of the congregation," they can ask Him to sanctify and bless them, who "did sanctify and join our first parents together in marriage."

The feeling of Christian people should of itself suggest this choice. But it is best, perhaps, on the whole, that it should be left to this—that a religious ordinance should not be *forced* on any. More evil would result from insisting that all persons of every character, and under whatever circumstances, should be prevented from acquiring the *civil* privileges of the married state, except by submitting, on legal compulsion, to use a religious ordinance that they perhaps dislike, and to ask in a most solemn form a blessing for which they do not care.

And there are certain cases—in which the Clergy, at least, should feel it a relief to *them* that parties who are permitted by the law of the land to marry may do so—and thus acquire the civil privileges which they desire—and which alone they value—without requiring



from the minister of Christ the profanation of a very solemn service of prayer and benediction.\*

II. Marriage is spoken of in the service as "*signifying the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and His Church.*" And in another passage these words are used— "*Who hast consecrated the state of matrimony to such an excellent mystery that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity betwixt Christ and His Church.*" The Nonconformist divines at the Savoy Conference took exception against this latter passage. But the Bishops' answer, though curtly given, was a very fair one: "We are sorry that the words of Scripture will not please."† For the words are those of St. Paul, occurring in that passage‡ which is quoted at the

\* Cromwell's idea was, that, as the absolute rule, "all persons should be married before the magistrate or registrar; and afterwards, at the option of the parties, by a minister of religion;" and this agrees with the French custom.

The objection to this plan would be its tending to bring the religious form into disuse and disregard. But there were some advantages in it. 1st. It avoided (as indeed our present law does also) the evil of making a religious form *compulsory*. 2ndly. It tended to protect that form from being *desecrated*. For thus the openly ungodly and profane, who lived in notorious contempt of the law of God and of public opinion (yet who could not be prevented from marrying if they pleased), were not compelled to ask "God's blessing," and so to add *hypocrisy* to other faults. And, 3rdly, Cromwell's twofold form of celebration served to keep distinct that double view of marriage which many confound, namely, as, 1st, a *divinely instituted ordinance*; and, 2ndly, in each individual case, a *civil contract also*.

† See Cardwell, chap. vii.

‡ Ephesians, chap. v.

beginning of the Exhortation—" *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.*"\* Or, "this mystery [this MYSTIC EMBLEM] is a great one; but I mean *great*—important and spiritually significant—as representing that union between Christ and His Bride, the Church—that is *mystically* shadowed out under the conjugal relationship."

III. "Which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with His presence, and first miracle that He wrought in Cana of Galilee."

That Christ should have selected a *festivity* for the occasion of his "First Miracle," marked his religion at the outset, as being far removed from the austerity and gloomy asceticism with which some have darkened it. It shows that Christ is willing to be with us in our rejoicings, as well as in our cares and mourning; that the same sanctifying presence may, if we desire and are glad to have it, hallow and "beautify" our innocent recreations, as well as our scenes of graver duty.

His choosing a "MARRIAGE FEAST" served, firstly, as a protest, once and for all, against that false teaching, that "doctrine of devils," as Paul calls it—which would cast slight on marriage, God's holy ordinance, as if it were not "honourable among all men." And, secondly, the occasion of this—the *inaugural act* of our Lord's

\* The Vulgate here translated mystery by "*sacrament*:" using that word (as it would seem) in the same loose general sense in which our Reformers also, at first, employed it; viz., for "*any sign of a religious meaning.*" See Appendix to Lecture VII. on "MYSTERY" and "SACRAMENT."

public ministry, may be regarded, without overstraining, as a designed symbol of that spiritual union which marriage "signifies and represents." At that wedding feast at Cana, there stood among the guests another Bridegroom, whom they knew not; there, by a silent act of power, signifying the union—the mystical espousal "then just commencing, and shortly to be accomplished, between Himself and the Church He was about to purchase with His blood."\*

IV. THE GIVING AND RECEIVING OF A RING. This is not, properly speaking a *religious* ceremony at all, any more than the entering of the names in the parochial register; but, the whole rite being of a twofold or mixed character, civil as well as religious, this ancient civil usage is introduced into it. Not being intended, therefore, as a *religious* act, it is quite unreasonable to object to it as being "superstitious." The real origin of the custom appears from the rubric in the First Prayer-Book [of Edward VI.] that the man shall give the woman "*a ring,*" with "*other tokens of spousage, as gold or silver.*" These were regarded as a pledge or part payment of the women's dowry; and in the old Salisbury Manual,† the minister was directed "to ask the woman's dowry, i. e. tokens of spousage; and by these tokens are to be understood rings, or money, or some other things to be given to the woman by the man; which said giving is called *subarratation*" [i. e. betrothal by covenant], "especially when it is done by the giving of a ring."

\* Bishop Copleston's Sermons [on Marriage in Cana]. See also Dean Trench's Notes on the Miracles.

† Or, "Use of Sarum." See Introduction, p. 2.

The custom is a very old one, at least as ancient as the days of Isaac, who sent Rebekah bracelets and rings in tokens of espousal.\*

"With this ring I thee *wed*;" "*I covenant with thee.*"† "Wed" is derived from a Saxon word "*weddian*," meaning "*to covenant*;" the compact made being further specified, "*with all my worldly goods I thee endow.*" And so the next prayer speaks of "*the vow and covenant betwixt them made (whereof this ring given and received is a token and pledge).*" Hence it is called the *wedding*, or *covenanting-ring*.

V. WITH MY BODY I THEE WORSHIP. "Worship" here means to "honour" or "pay due respect." The word originally is "*worth-ship*." People have sometimes, from ignorance, objected to the expression here; its only fault, however, is that of being old-fashioned, and consequently liable to be misunderstood. We use it now of honour paid to God; but in Wicliff's translation of the Bible we find (John, xii. 26), "If any man serve me, my Father shall *worship* him;" and in Matt. xix. 19, "Worship thy father and mother." And in 1 Samuel, ii. 30 ("Them that honour me I will honour"), Cranmer's Bible, from which our Psalter is taken, has it, "*I will worship.*" We have still (in Luke, x. 10), "Then shalt thou have *worship* in the presence of them that sit at

\* Gen. xxiv. 22, 30.

† After these words the First Book of Edward added, "*This gold and silver I give thee*;" in repeating which, the man gave the woman a purse of money, in token of endowing her, or [in legal phrase] "*as livery and seisin*" of his estate.—See Wheatley.

meat with thee." We still address a magistrate on the bench as "Your Worship," or "Your Honour;" and speak of the "Worshipful the Mayor," as well as "The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor."\*

VI. "AS ISAAC AND REBEKAH lived faithfully together."—*Prayer after espousals*. This example appears to be particularly referred to, because Isaac is the only one of the patriarchs who had not a plurality of wives. He lived faithfully with Rebekah, "according to God's holy ordinance," in the primitive institution of marriage, referred to by our Lord in Matt. xix.

VII. (1.) The passage in the EXHORTATION, from 1 Peter, iii. is plainer if rendered thus:—"Ye husbands, dwell with your wives, according to knowledge of the wife as [or rather, '*as knowing the wife to be*'] the weaker vessel;" i. e. with an intelligent, considerate, remembrance of this circumstance:—"giving honour unto her, withal, as being a fellow-heir of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered;" that is, "so that you do not, by degrading her from this, her true position, lose the blessing, both to yourself and to her, of united Christian prayer."

(2.) In the same Apostle's advice to wives so to behave towards their husbands "that if any obey not the word, he may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives,"—"conversation" means "manner of life." That is, that "without the word" being preached to them by their wives [or if they will not listen to it], they

\* See Bishop Mant on the Prayer-Book, and Trench's English Past and Present.

may be won over to the Gospel by the silent example of their wives' Christian life.—“ While they behold your chaste conversation [behaviour], coupled with *fear*,” or rather “ *reverence*”—“ *due wifely respect*.”

The duties of which the Apostle goes on to speak are sometimes treated as if remonstrance on these points, from modern preachers, were out of place—well suited to the primitive simplicity of ancient times, but—“ out of date.” And yet his words “ contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, and necessary for these times.”

“ *Whose adorning let it not be [let it not consist in] that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel : but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in old time the holy women also who trusted in God adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands ; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord ; whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement,*” i. e. as long as ye do your duty faithfully, not being “ afraid of *any alarm*,” by which he seems to mean, “ not afraid of any unkind or harsh advantage being taken on the part of your husbands of your gentleness and submissive behaviour.”\*

\* Those women who are fond of asserting the rights and independence of their sex, seem to be actuated by this fear [*προησις*] which the Apostle speaks of. They seem afraid lest a meek and womanly behaviour should compromise their dignity, and lead men to presume upon or take ungenerous advantage of their “ submissiveness.”

## THE THANKSGIVING OF WOMEN AFTER CHILDBIRTH,

## COMMONLY CALLED

## THE CHURCHING OF WOMEN.

THIS office is inserted in the Prayer-Book after the Burial Service. It is derived from the Jewish rite of purification, and was indeed called at first "*The Order of the Purification of Women.*" But to prevent a superstitious use of it, through a confusion with the Jewish ceremony, the title was changed to one expressing its design as simply an expression of "Thanksgiving." The service is manifestly to be used only in church; for this the title implies. No rule is laid down as to the part of Divine Service at which it should be read, and usage differs on this point; in most English churches it is read before the General Thanksgiving; but in some immediately before the Communion Office, as was perhaps the original practice. As to the *place* in which the office is to be read, the only direction is, "*The woman shall kneel down in some convenient place, as hath been accustomed, or as the Ordinary shall direct.*" The "accustomed place," in most churches, until the last review, "*was nigh unto the place where the Table standeth,*" i. e. at the Communion rails.

Against this, however, the Apostle turns in the next verse with a direct address to husbands, appealing to their generosity and Christian feeling, reminding them of the consideration and respect *they* owe their wives,—"*Likewise, ye husbands,*" &c. [See above.]

The Eucharistic character of the Office is indicated by the last rubric, which declares that, "if there be a Communion, it is convenient that she receive," this being a fit expression of her devout thanksgiving to God.



## LECTURE XIII.

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### THE ORDER FOR THE VISITATION OF THE SICK.

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#### PSALM ciii. 2, 3.

*“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases.”*

HITHERTO we have been considering the Public Services; those that we use when we go to the house of God, “with the voice of joy and praise, with the multitude of them that keep holy-day.” But now the ordinances of our Church lead us into the stillness and seclusion of the sick chamber; reminding us there, too, in the time of trouble “to call upon the Lord;” there, too, to claim the Saviour’s promise, “*Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*” There is a difference between this Office and the others. In the public services a clergyman has no right to deviate in any particular from the forms prescribed; but here he is at greater liberty. The 67th Canon directs that, “*When any person is dangerously sick, the minister . . . shall resort unto him or her . . . to instruct and com-*

*fort them in their distress, according to the order of the Communion Book, if he be no preacher ; or, if he be a preacher, then as he shall think most needful and convenient."*

In fact, just as the Homilies were drawn up for the use of ministers who might not, in those days of scanty learning, have been able to compose sermons of their own, so it was thought better to have an "Order" for the visitation of the sick, than to leave so important a duty to the unassisted discretion of those who might not all be qualified to undertake it. A clergyman, therefore—"if he be a preacher"—is not by any rule of our Church tied absolutely to this form. And wisely not; for in communication with the sick he has to vary his reading, his prayers, his conversation, in order to suit the infinite variety of cases that he meets with—all of which could not be comprehended in a single office, that was meant only to be *suggestive*.\*

He will indeed be guided by the spirit of this form, though not bound to the letter of it.

He may not always, for example, on "coming into the sick man's house," speak aloud those opening words of formal salutation, "*Peace be to this house, and all that dwell in it.*" And yet he will remember that as "a messenger of peace" he enters it, and he will carry this prayer always in his heart.

When he exhorts the sick, he will not always do so in the very phrases of the Exhortation given; but he is

\* It is held by some, however, that this latitude of choice in the "preacher" refers only to the form of Exhortation, and to no other part of the Office.

there "to instruct and comfort;" and this he will do [as indeed the rubric suggests], if not—"after this form," yet in "*some other like*." And so, in other instances, to which I shall refer just now. I need not go through the whole Office; but pass on at once to that portion of it which has been more objected to than any other part of our Prayer-Book,—I mean, the passage which speaks of CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION.

The very words call up suspicion. And it is little wonder that they should with many, for they suggest to them two ordinances which, as practised by the Church of Rome, are amongst the most mischievous of her corruptions. But, if they do, they certainly suggest two very different things, indeed, from what our Prayer-Book contemplates.

We should remember that near every truth there lurks some counterfeiting error; and that this error exercises a misleading influence in two different ways. It beguiles some through its plausible resemblance to the truth which it corruptly imitates. And it scares away others from the truth itself, through fear of the falsehood which they confound with it. The wiser and safer way is always to walk up, and examine the reality and its counterfeit; and to "distinguish things that differ," by the light God puts into our hands; having our "senses exercised to discern both the good and the evil."

Let us then first have before us the whole of the offending passage, rubric and all:—

*"Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter.*

*After which confession the priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it), after this sort :—*

“OUR Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences: And, by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—Amen.”

All this requires explanation; one cannot wonder that some should be perplexed by it. First, then,—what does the priest [or presbyter] mean when he says, “And by His authority, &c., I absolve thee from all thy sins?” The form is evidently different from that of our Morning and Evening Prayer; the words are stronger; they seem direct and absolute. Does then the presbyter mean that he absolves the person from the guilt of sins, *as committed against God*? No; certainly his words do not mean this. For it is God only who alike “healeth all our diseases, and FORGIVETH ALL OUR INIQUITIES.”

And what, then, do they mean?

That you will best determine by looking to the form in which the “*authority*” of which he speaks has been “*committed*” to him. In admitting to the “*Order of Priesthood*,” the Bishop says, “*Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.*” These words were said by our Lord to the Apostles, and are recorded by St. John.\* The question is, were they meant for the Apostles alone, or

\* John, chap. xx. 23.

not?\* Are they, in short, applied to *us* at Ordination, in the same sense in which our Lord first used them, or in a different sense? *In the same sense*, I think. And

\* The fullest explanation of those well-known texts, Matt. xvi. 19, xviii. 18; John, xx. 23; and of the whole subject, is to be found in Barrow's Exposition on the Creed. The following is a summary:—The promise to St. Peter, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (i. e. the Church on earth), was given by Christ, as Head and Supreme Governor of His Spiritual Kingdom. "*Keys*" are instruments designed to give entrance or to prevent it; to open and shut, (comp. Rev. iii. 7; Luke, xi. 52; Matt. xxiii. 13; also Isaiah, xxii. 23); therefore "*the power of the keys*" represents, metaphorically, an authority to admit or to exclude. So the mayor keeps the *keys* of the city, in token of his magisterial commission, and as representing the citizenry. St. Peter used the keys (figuratively speaking), when, in baptizing Cornelius, &c., he opened the *door* of the Christian Church to the Gentiles—that door which has never since been shut—through which the nations have for two thousand years gone streaming into the kingdom. *Lightfoot* indeed restricts this promise of the keys to Peter, and says we have its performance in the story of Cornelius. But (he says) the power of "binding and loosing was given to the other apostles also," and referred to the making of *rules*—being used in the Jewish schools of things, not persons.

*Barrow* goes on to say that "A similar authority is given to all the apostles in the words, '*Whatever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound,*'" &c. He says, "This *binding* and *loosing* is a power legislative, of making and repealing laws and rules, and is so termed among Jewish writers;" but from the connexion of the verse in Matthew, he thinks that it includes "the exercise of any jurisdiction, the decision of any case, the awarding of any amends, any mulct to be imposed, any punishment to be inflicted." And to this sort of jurisdiction the phrase properly refers, of "*retaining and remitting.*"

These powers were not, however, given to Peter only, nor to the Apostles exclusively, but to any congregation or society of Christians."

what then is this sense? Does our Lord's commission give to the Apostles—to any men or set of men—the power of forgiving sins *as against God*?

I answer, with a well-known expounder of the Prayer-Book, that “these words were never understood by the primitive Christians to imply a standing authority in the ministers of the gospel to pardon sins immediately and directly, in relation to God, and as to which the censure of the Church had been in no wise concerned; there being no mention made in any of the ancient Fathers, that any such authority was ever pretended to by any Church whatever, for a great many centuries after Christ.”\* What some of the Jews urged as an objection was true in point of fact: none “*can forgive sins* (as offences against God) *but God only*.”

This privilege and authority was by our Saviour committed to THE CHURCH; and if to the Church, then (as to its use and exercise) to the governors thereof, who act in behalf thereof, i. e. *as representing the community*. These powers they and “the governors of the Christian Church after them” exercised variously; “opening the door of the Church by preaching the Gospel”—testifying repentance and faith in Christ, and so “bringing men into a state of favour with God and into the kingdom of His beloved Son by baptism; so receiving persons well instructed and well disposed into it; opening it again by receiving persons who had been for heinous offences put out [excommunicated], on due testification of amendment and repentance; shutting it on persons unfit to enter; *separating and excluding from it* [the Church] *such as notoriously misbehaved themselves therein to the dishonour, disturbance, and detriment of the Church*” Bishop Jewel, in the Apology (chap. ii.) says substantially the same. Compare Archbishop Whately's Kingdom of Christ, Essay II.—See Note H.

\* Wheatley.

Yet in one view man *has* a power of forgiving sins. You have that power, and so have I. "If thy brother trespass against thee, forgive him." We are not merely authorized, but *bound*—commanded as a duty—to forgive one another.

But when a man has wronged you, and you say to him, "I forgive you this wrong," do you mean that you release him from the guilt which his wrong-doing has contracted in the sight of God? If a servant has robbed you, and you have threatened to put him away, you may afterwards say, "I forgive you—I remit the sentence—I restore you to my household and its privileges." So saying, you absolve him *as your servant*; and yet you do not mean that you release him from the sin of breaking one of God's commandments.

Thus, too, a society deals with its members. Every society must of necessity have these three things, which are essential to its constitution and existence:—1stly, *RULES*; 2ndly, *POWER* to enforce those rules; and, 3rdly, *OFFICERS* by whom to carry them into execution. If any member is guilty of misconduct, he is regarded *as an offender against the society*; as no longer entitled to partake its privileges, or be associated with its other members. Accordingly he is deprived of privileges, suspended, or expelled, as the case may be. The punishment, whatever it may be, is inflicted by the community for the act, regarded as an offence against itself; and the sentence, which is in fact the decision of the entire body, is usually pronounced by one of its officers, who is considered as speaking, not in his own name, but *as a repre-*

*representative of the society.* The members may, if they see occasion, re-admit the person upon whom censure has been past; then they "forgive" him; or they may refuse to do so; and, in each case, they are exercising a discretionary power, so far as the society is concerned, of "*remitting*" or "*retaining*."

Now, the Christian Church is a Society; each separate Church a branch Association of the great "company of faithful people." As a society, each Church has of necessity (1), Rules; (2), Power to enforce them; and (3), Officers by whom to do so.

Any one who scandalously sins against the laws of Christianity is, by the same act, an offender against the Church, *as a community*. And the Church, whether collectively or by its representatives, may punish the offender by excluding him from membership, or by depriving him of certain privileges. This appears to be the authority which our Lord, as HEAD OF THE CHURCH, gave to his Church—as a society,—through the medium of the Apostles, who were, as one may say, the nucleus of that society, and its representatives. In this intention the Apostles themselves seem to have understood their Master. For what is the best clue that we can find to the sense in which they apprehended their commission? Evidently, *the manner in which they exercised it*. Now, do we find the Apostles ever exercising or claiming power of forgiving sins in relation to God? If so, where is the passage? Throughout the Acts—through all the Epistles—I cannot see a trace of such a thing. They received a commission to "preach"—and we find them



accordingly preaching; to "baptize"—and we see them accordingly baptizing; to work miracles—and we find them continually showing the "signs of an Apostle." And if they did (as some suppose) receive a power of forgiving sins in relation to God, would it not be very strange to find no record of their exercising such a privilege? But in truth (as it appears at least to me), no record of the sort is to be found.

We have indeed examples of their exercising peculiar apostolic authority in the matter of punishment; thus, for example, we have the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira by St. Peter, the infliction of blindness on Elymas the Sorcerer by St. Paul; and we find traces also of a special authority reserved to the Apostles, of inflicting bodily diseases as a punishment or *chastisement* of sin.\*

But these are cases of a quite different character. These are cases of extraordinary miraculous inflictions, authorized in the same special way as was the infliction of leprosy by Moses on his sister Miriam, and by Elisha the prophet on Gehazi, the destruction through fire of the "captains of fifty," by Elijah, &c. These were, in short, *special divine visitations*, sent through the Apostles as inspired prophets—as persons commissioned both to declare and to inflict such manifestations of God's displeasure. But of the general commission "to remit or retain sins" we find the direct exercise to have consisted

\* For, *besides excommunication*, something of the kind also seems implied in a "delivery to Satan for the destruction of the flesh" (see 1 Tim. i. 20); and the same power the Apostle delegates to the Corinthian Church, at 1 Cor. v. 5. Compare *Alford*.

in the infliction or removal of ECCLESIASTICAL CENSURES ; that is, in the enforcement of the rules of the Christian Society by sentences of *excommunication and restoration*.

Take, e. g. the case most frequently appealed to—that of the Corinthian who had taken to himself “ his father’s wife.” St. Paul writes to the Corinthian Church [see 1 Cor. v.] to “ purge out that leaven,” “ to put away from among themselves that wicked person”—to treat him, in short, as excommunicate. He desires them, indeed (verses 4, 5), to accompany that sentence of excommunication by consigning him in a very solemn way to a mysterious *bodily* punishment of some sort ; this, however, he commands in the inspired exercise of that extraordinary commission which I have spoken of.

But the censure here pronounced, in pursuance of the general commission extending to all times and every Church, was a sentence of excommunication—of separation from the Christian community and from its privileges. For turn to the second Epistle (chapter ii.) He there calls on the Corinthians, as a community, to forgive this man. “ *Ye ought to forgive him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.*” The man’s repentance seemed to be genuine ; and therefore the Corinthians might restore him, sure that such an act on their part would have the sanction of Christ Himself, as well as of His Apostle. In whatever sense the Apostle absolves the offender, in the same sense he calls on the Corinthian Church to absolve him too. Christ, the Saviour of the body—the Head of the Church—

would not exclude from it a penitent; neither ought they. St. Paul feels, on his part, quite assured that this is a fair case to act on the commission given—"to remit"—or, in other words, to restore the repentant. And he assures them that they, in exercising the same authority as a Christian society, might feel persuaded of the approval of Christ Himself—their Governor and Head—"To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also; for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes [on your account] forgave I it, in the person of Christ"—i. e. acting on the authority of Christ, and hoping to have His sanction. The Apostle having the Spirit of God—"the mind of Christ"—his forgiveness might be with confidence taken as the true expression of Christ's: and this is certain, that the nearer any individual or any Church approaches to Christ Jesus in character and spirit, the more likely is the verdict of that individual or that Church to be in accordance with Christ's. We should be naturally glad to receive an assurance of approbation from a good man, or from a set of people in whose sound Christian judgment and feeling we had good reason to trust; and why? Because just in proportion to the Christian character of the man, or body of men, his or their approbation would be regarded as faithfully interpreting the secret judgment passed on us by their Master and ours. So, in the matter of forgiveness, assurance of it from an individual or from a body that we respect is doubly valuable, because it seems a consolatory reflection and expression of Christ's mind. But this is matter of *inference* from the forgiveness which they extend; the

forgiveness itself which they directly convey—and we accept from them—is, and can only be, as for offences committed against man.

So then, I think, the permanent commission given by our Lord is an *authority to the Church* (to be exercised in an orderly way through its appointed ministers), for the infliction and removal of Church Censures.

What are these censures?

In the present day—amongst ourselves—they are more out of sight than they once were, from various causes. Partly, from this cause, the law of the land is itself so far *Christianized* as to do for the Church what long ago—in ruder times—she was obliged to do for herself, and what she still has to do in heathen places, where there is no Christian legislative or executive power at hand to help her.

Much, at least, of the ancient Church discipline is with us less necessary than it was, and could not well be carried out. Some of the rubrics, however, and the canons more plainly still, show how much importance was attached to these Church censures long ago. But the chief censure—that one to which the greatest importance was attached—is one that every Christian Church must, in some measure, retain the power of imposing. I mean the withholding of the Lord's Supper from open, scandalous, offenders.\*

This power is exercised in some of the Dissenting bodies, and in the Presbyterian Church much more

\* See Lecture VI.

rigorously than in our own. It was stoutly maintained always by Knox and the other Scottish Reformers.\*

And if men felt the value of this ordinance as they ought—and as the early Christians did—they would feel exclusion from it a great deprivation and disgrace. Almost every Missionary Report will tell you how usefully this “wholesome discipline” is brought to bear on congregations where there is no law but the Church’s to mark disapproval, and to put a visible separation between the Christian body and those through whom the name of Christ is “blasphemed among the heathen.”†

The case, then, contemplated in the “Visitation of the Sick,” appears to be that of a person either lying under or meriting such a sentence. His conscience is troubled with some ‘weighty matter.’ He is or *feels himself deservedly to be* excluded, by some ‘grievous fault,’ from the fellowship of Christian people. He wishes to be admitted to the communion of the Church, perhaps to partake of its chief privilege—the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper;‡ and the minister ‘proceeds to *reconcile him to the Church,*’ and then “to recommend him to the throne of grace in the prayer that follows.”§ He

\* See M’Crie’s Life of Knox.

† And I remember to have heard a well-known zealous clergyman (the Rev. T—— M——) give a most touching account of the useful effect produced by the exercise of the same discipline upon his new congregation of converts in the west of Ireland.

‡ In the rubrics it is directed that in case the Holy Communion is to be administered at the same time, the clergyman is to proceed with that Office immediately after the prayer following the absolution.

§ Wheatley.

first utters a prayer that Jesus Christ—the Head of the Church—may, in that character, ratify and seal the act of restoration. And then, relying on the man's declared profession, trusting to Christ's known willingness to receive "the weary and heavy laden," he acts in hope, and to the best of his judgment, upon the general authority committed by our Lord to His Church, and vested representatively in her ministers: "I absolve thee—I restore thee to the communion of the faithful—I remit thy sins *in relation to the Church*—that visible company which is Christ's Body." This does not mean, however, remission of the moral guilt in relation to God. For, if that were meant, what is the meaning of the prayer which follows?

"O most merciful God, who, according to the multitude of thy mercies, dost so put away the sins of those who truly repent, that thou rememberest them no more, open thine eyes of mercy upon this thy servant, *who most earnestly desireth pardon and forgiveness.*"

If the priest has absolved him from his sins, as against God Almighty, why does he yet "*desire pardon and forgiveness?*" Some say, the Absolution is declaratory, strongly conveying the assurance of God's mercy, with strength of language proportioned to the weakness of the trembling penitent.\*

But, if it were "declaratory of God's pardon, how still

\* What some writers have termed the "*medicinal absolution*," adapted to the necessities of the diseased and weak in spirit. And some no doubt approved and adopted, as many still *defend* it on this ground. But all did not; for many of the Reformers themselves and of our best divines have advocated the view put forward in this Lecture.—See Note H.

are we to account for the prayer? Would not the order of our Morning Service be more natural, i. e., *first*, the *prayer for forgiveness*, and *then* the *declaration of it*?

But here comes first the Absolution, then the Prayer. That is,—according to the explanation which certainly lies most naturally on the surface of the forms themselves, and also according to that which at least many of the contemporaneous writers give—first comes the Absolution, which restores to Church communion, and brings the man again into the fold of Christ: and then the minister—having as it were, taken the penitent by the hand, and brought him back into Christ's household—kneels with him as a fellow-Christian, and in the name of that Saviour who (as he trusts) now again owns him as a "very member," he prays for him that God would pardon and put away his sins:—

"Renew in him, most loving Father, whatsoever hath been decayed . . . . *preserve and continue this sick member in the unity of the Church* [that unity to which he has been just restored] . . . . And forasmuch as he putteth his full trust only in THY mercy, impute not unto him his former sins," &c.\*

Now, what is there to find fault with in all this?

What is there here more than every clergyman must do, and in fact *practically does*, whether he use this very form or not?†

\* "The prayer which immediately follows the preceding form is, in fact, the original absolution which had been given to dying penitents for more than 1300 years in the Western Churches."—Palmer's *Orig. Liturg.*, II. p. 229.

† It is remarkable that the words were at first, "shall absolve him *after this form*," but were (in 1552) changed to "*after this sort*."

Set the whole case before your minds as regards both the "confession" and the "absolving" here intended.

Suppose a clergyman is visiting a sick—a dying man. He finds that his conscience is troubled with some weighty matter. The man asks, in the first instance, counsel. Is the clergyman to refuse to listen to his story? Ought he to decline advising him in his grief? Few will maintain this; I venture to say, none.

Would he not be right in saying, "Tell me your difficulties if you like, and as far as you like, so that it be honestly; and I will try to help you. I will assist you, with God's blessing, to a right understanding of His threats and promises."

No one will say that such a privilege of confidential consultation should be forbidden; for Scripture clearly recommends it. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."\* This confession, indeed, differs, on the face of it, from such confession as the Romish Church enjoins. For the Romish confession is (1stly), *compulsory*; (2ndly), to be *made to a priest*; (3rdly), in order to receive a priestly *absolution*: while that which the writer of this Epistle speaks of, is (1stly), entirely *voluntary*; (2ndly), may be made to *any Christian friend*—"one to another;" (3rdly), is with a view to *counsel* and mutual *prayer*—"pray one for another."

[See Procter, note, p. 411]. Was the rubric changed here in order to leave even the *non-preacher* free as to this part of his Office, as the Canon had left the "*preacher*" free in respect of the whole of it?

\* James, v. 16.



A person whose "conscience is troubled with some weighty matter," though he is not *bound* to open his mind to any human being, will certainly do wisely in using such a help as Scripture recommends, and taking counsel of some Christian friend in his perplexities. He may choose any counsellor he pleases; but if any is to be suggested in such a case as that to which we are referring, who is so naturally to be suggested as the Pastor, who may, perhaps, be the only one to come and minister by the bedside of the sick and dying? What other is so near at hand, or so likely to advise him, as the clergyman, who has been specially called to this ministry, and has had most experience in it?

You do not, perhaps, like the associations of the word "confession;" then, call it—if you prefer that term—a friendly and confidential "consultation;" for this is really what it *is*; and the minister, in giving his counsel, is discharging a *pastoral* and not a *sacerdotal* function.

But, in the case contemplated in the service, he has a further office besides giving advice. The man—as is supposed—has spoken of the burden pressing on his conscience. He is a person who feels himself virtually, if not actually—deservedly, if not formally—shut out from communion with Christian people; disqualified by grievous sin from sharing in the privileges of Christ's holy Church. And yet he is repentant; he wishes to be restored, and to receive the seal of fellowship with Christ and with His people—the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Suppose he expresses this wish under such circum-

stances, and asks the minister to give to him that holy ordinance, the clergyman must either say, "I will," or "I will not." If he says, "I will," then he is taking upon him to restore that man to Christian communion. If he replies, "I cannot do so; I am not satisfied as to the sincerity and thoroughness of your repentance; and I dare not give 'that which is holy' to the unrepentant," then he is excluding him from Christian fellowship. Then, I contend that, *whether he use these words or not*, he is saying precisely what this form means, and doing the same thing that is here done.

And every minister, of whatever denomination, whether a clergyman of our Church or not—who takes on himself, as he must do, the discretion of administering the Holy Communion to a dying man, or else of withholding it—is in the one case admitting that man into Christian membership; or, in the other case, excluding him. Then he is exercising, not in his own name, but on behalf of the Christian community, the power of "*re-mitting*," or "*retaining*."

I readily allow that in this passage of the Prayer-book some alteration may be desirable, for the sake of avoiding misconstruction and offence. But this must be remembered, too, that even if the terms were altered here,\* and nothing were here said either of "confessing" or "absolving," the *things* which are intended must always remain. The change would, after all, be verbal rather than substantial.

For there always will remain more or less of a con-

\* As they have been in the American Prayer-Book.

fidential intercourse between a clergyman and the people committed to his charge. The duty of a faithful pastor will always be the same—to “strengthen that which is weak; to bind up that which was broken; to bring again that which was driven away.” As long as any Church subsists on earth, clergymen of every persuasion will have, at some time or another, to deal with conscience-stricken penitents upon a bed of death. Every gaol chaplain, nay, every city clergyman, will tell you that not a month, hardly a week, passes without his meeting cases of the sort—without his being compelled to make that very decision which I have spoken of, i. e. either to “*re-mit*” or to “*retain*.”

Let me conclude this subject with one practical reflection.

I have reminded you of some who asked respecting our Lord, “Who can forgive sins but God only?” and they imagined theirs to be a virtuous—a holy indignation; they thought that they were “very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts,” and right in standing up for His prerogative. And yet it was not that they really cared for forgiveness; for, if they had, they would not, as if whole, have turned from “*THE PHYSICIAN*.” They did not feel their need of pardon; and so they “could not believe,” when the Saviour said, “the Son of Man hath power to forgive.” And it is possible for those who clearly know—and rightly believe that none “*can forgive sins but God only*,” to live without that mercy which they so well know where to find; and so to perish in *unforgiven sin*.

You may have learnt, with all the orthodoxy of those Jews, to cease from man ; but will “ye also go away” from Him who with authority and power says, “thy sins be forgiven?” He is exalted a PRINCE and a SAVIOUR, to give repentance to His people, and remission of sins. Do not be content to know this, or to maintain it with zeal—but more—forget not—make all your own—“the benefits that He hath done unto thee ; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who crowneth thee with mercies and loving-kindness.”

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NOTE H.

IN vindication of the view maintained in this Lecture, I have extracted the following from the original authorities.

I. FIELD, Dean of Gloucester, who took part in the Hampton Court Conference in 1603 writes:—“Absolution is now supposed to be a sacramental act, giving grace, and remitting sin as regards the guilt and penalty ; but in the primitive Church it was nothing else but a restoring of men formerly put from the sacrament, and cast out of the Church, to the Church’s peace and use of the sacraments again, as appeareth by Cyprian’s Epistle.”—Field’s Book of the Church, App. B. iii. ch. 24. In another place he says,—“*Only the same punishments* which they have *power to inflict* they have authority to diminish, lessen, or take away ; so that whom they bind with the bonds of ecclesiastical censures and punishments, those by the same authority they may unloose.”—Vol. iii. pp. 161, 162.

II. THORNDIKE, one of the Commissioners at the Savoy Conference in A. D. 1661, after speaking of the “absolution or remission of sins brought to the sinner by the *preaching of the Gospel*, goes on to say,—“But if we regard THE SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH, then is

it the act of a judge to *admit* or *exclude* from the communion of the same; the jurisdiction being founded upon the power of the keys, which sentenceth those that demand the communion of the Church, to be qualified or not qualified for it, admitting or excluding them accordingly."—Thorndike's Works, vol. i. part 1, p. 125, Lib. Ang. Cath. Theology.

III. BISHOP JEWEL, saying also that the minister exercises the power of loosing, first, "by the preaching of the Gospel;" adds, "or, secondly, reconciles, restores, and receives into the congregation and unity of the faithful those penitents who by any grievous scandal, or known and public offence, have offended the minds of their brethren, and, in a sort, alienated and separated themselves from the common society of the Church, and the body of Christ," &c.—Jewel's Apology, pp. 25, 26.

IV. HOOKER thus writes:—"The sentence of ministerial absolution hath two effects: touching sin, it only declareth us free from the guiltiness thereof, and restored into God's favour; but concerning right in sacred and divine mysteries, whereof, through sin, we were made unworthy, as the power of the Church did before effectually bind and retain us from access unto them; so, upon our apparent repentance, it [the Church, observe; the minister only as representing it] truly restoreth our liberty, looseth the chains wherewith we were tied, remitteth all whatsoever is past, and accepteth us no less returned, than if we had never gone astray."—Hooker's Works, Book vi. ch. vi. 5.

V. DR. MARSHALL, in his "Penitential Discipline of the Primitive Church," proves, incontestibly, that the form in which absolution was "of old expressed" was that of prayer. This (he shows) "continued as low as the twelfth century;" when the *indicative* form was super-added. But this "indicative" way was only at first understood to *reconcile to the Church, whilst the deprecatory was what procured from God the penitent's pardon.*"—Marshall's Penitential Discipline, pp. 147, 148.\*

\* The above agrees exactly with what appears to be the natural interpretation of the Visitation Service.

## ON THE FORM IN THE VISITATION OFFICE.

I. DR. MARSHALL says,—“As to the *pardon* of sin . . . the power of the priest is mediate and ministerial (not direct nor judicial) and therefore, in his exercise of it, the form should be rather precatory than peremptory. But in restoring a man to the peace of the Church (which he may *ipso facto* have forfeited, though sentence hath never, perhaps, been denounced against him), then the form may warrantably be indicative. In the office just cited (i. e. for the Visitation of the Sick), our Church had used both the forms, the one introductory to the other; the *optative* is first used, “Our Lord Jesus Christ of His great mercy forgive thee,” &c.; and then follows the *indicative*, “By his authority, I absolve thee,” &c. So that in the one a pardon is begged for the penitent, and in the other applied to him.

“Yet presently after the priest and the penitent are both directed to renew this prayer . . . . It looks as if our Church intended by this indicative form only the restoration of the penitent to her peace and communion, inasmuch as, in the prayer subjoined to it, a request is specially made that God would ‘continue this sick member in the unity of the Church.’”—Marshall’s Pen. Discipline, pp. 152, 153, Lib. Ang. Cath. Theology, Oxford, 1844.

II. DR. BURNET, Bishop of Salisbury (A. D. 1689), says;—“We of this Church, who use it only to such as are thought to be near death, cannot be meant to understand anything by it but the full peace and pardon of the Church; for if we meant a pardon with relation to God, we ought to use it upon many other occasions. The pardon that we give in the name of God is only declaratory of His pardon, or supplicating in a prayer to Him for pardon. In this we have the whole practice of the Church till the twelfth century universally on our side. All the fathers, all the ancient liturgies, all that have writ upon the Offices, and the first schoolmen, are so express in this matter, that the thing in fact cannot be denied.”—Burnet on the XXXIX Articles, Art. xxv.

III. BISHOP MARSH says,—“ Even the absolution is not given unless ‘ *he humbly and heartily desire it.*’ Of this absolution, though it is often quoted for the purpose of showing the similarity of our Church to the Church of Rome, it cannot be necessary to make many observations. The case, in which alone it is to be used, is a case which *hardly ever occurs*. It is to be used only, according to the rubric, when the sick person has thought proper to make a ‘ special confession of his sins,’ and then heartily desires the absolution. The consequence is, that *very few clergymen have ever had occasion to use it.*”—Comparative View, p. 220, note. Compare further on this point Hammond’s Works, On the Power of the Keys, vol. i.; Wheatley on Common Prayer; and see a pamphlet by the Rev. C. Elliott, on An Enquiry into the Doctrine of the Church of England on Confession and Absolution.—Rivingtons, London.

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THE Office for “THE COMMUNION OF THE SICK” originally directed the minister to reserve from the public Communion a sufficient portion of the consecrated elements for the sick of the parish; but at the revision of 1552, all mention of this reservation was omitted. At the last revision, in 1661, the number of persons required for a private Communion was fixed by the rubric, which directed that there “shall be three, or two at the least,” to communicate with the sick person, so that the number considered proper to form a company of communicants is now the same as in the case of open Communion. There is an exception allowed in times of contagious sickness, when the minister, on special request of the diseased person, may, alone, communicate with him.

The rubric at the end of this Office, respecting spiritual Communion, is worth attention; being the strongest possible comment on the doctrine of our Church (in Art. XXVIII.) that “The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and

spiritual manner," &c. For in cases of necessity, where it is *impossible* to receive the material elements, the devout Christian is to be consoled by the assurance that "he doth eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the Sacrament with his mouth."



## LECTURE XIV.

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THE ORDER FOR

THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

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REV. xiv. 13.

*“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from  
henceforth.”*

FROM the earliest times it has been customary in the Christian Church to inter the bodies of the dead with a respectful care, and with some decent ceremonial.\*

To Christians this duty seemed stronger than to others. Nature might lead men to count the earthly tabernacle dear from association, and for the sake of the human soul it had enshrined;—but revelation sanctified the feeling, and strengthened it—for it taught us to regard the Christian's body as the shrine of a far nobler presence, as the temple of the Holy Ghost,—and it assures us that if the

\* Julian the Apostate, writing to an idolatrous high-priest, puts him in mind of those things by which he thought the Christians gained upon the world, and recommends them to the practice of the heathen priests. He instances the gravity of their bearing, their kindness to strangers, and their care for the burial of the dead.—See Wheatley.

Spirit of Christ have dwelt in it, by the same Spirit shall that mortal body be one day quickened; and that, vile as it is now, it shall be fashioned through Christ's mighty working "into the likeness of His own glorious Body."\*

The Burial Service had in the middle ages been corrupted by the intermixture of prayers for the dead, and other superstitious ceremonies. But these were purged away by our Reformers. They re-constructed the Office into its present simple form, in agreement with the rule of St. Augustin, that funeral rites were designed, "not for the benefit of the dead, but for the comfort and improvement of the living."

One of the rubrics prefixed says, "*Here is to be noted, that the office ensuing is not to be used for any that die unbaptized—or excommunicate—or that have laid violent hands upon themselves.*"

With respect to the first—the unbaptized—it is not that our Church pronounces here any judgment as to the *eternal state* of infants who die without the opportunity of baptism.† The case is simply this:—The Service is constructed for the use of the Christian Church; and all along supposes that the individual has been a member of it; in other words, has been baptized. And so, if all the Prayers and Exhortations of this Service go on this supposition, we have no right to use them as an Office of the Church respecting any others. A civilian is not interred with military honours—simply because he has been a civilian, not a soldier, and it is in the case of soldiers only that such honours are applicable. Neither can an unbap-

\* Romans, viii. 11; Phil. iii. 21.

† See Lecture IX.

tized person be spoken of as having been that which in fact he was not—a member of the Christian Church on earth. In short, the Service is not applicable to the facts of the case, and for that reason cannot, with truth, be applied to it.

The second class excluded are "*the excommunicated*;" i. e. those persons only upon whom a formal sentence of excommunication has been passed by the competent legal tribunal. Such sentences used to be inflicted in ancient times. Men were in those days formally excluded from Church communion and on repentance formally restored to it. If a man professed repentance even on his death-bed, the Church's sentence might be revoked; for (by a special provision) the minister was in that case permitted, in his visitation of the sick, to exercise on behalf of the Church that authority which Christ has vested in it as a society; the right, namely, to exclude from or restore to its communion—to "*remit*" or to "*retain*." It was only, therefore, in cases of persons who had been publicly excommunicated, and had died unrepentant, that the use of the Christian Burial Service was forbidden. No clergyman, however, has the right to treat an individual as excommunicated, upon whom the legal sentence of excommunication has not been formally pronounced by the ecclesiastical authorities.

The third class excluded consists of those "who have laid violent hands upon themselves." Here exception has been always made in the cases of persons who have committed this act under *insanity*. And this is a question to be decided by a coroner's inquest. For though the

jury may be, and doubtless often *are* much mistaken on the point, still it is better in every way that such a point should be determined by an authorized, though fallible, tribunal, than that it should be left to the discretion of each individual minister. And it relieves the clergyman from the pain and difficulty which he would have in deciding such a matter on his own responsibility.

The second introductory rubric directs that the opening sentences are to be said or sung while going "*either into the church or towards the grave*:" that is, "into the church on all ordinary occasions; and to the grave in certain cases, as, for example, if the person has died of any infectious disease."\*

The opening sentences are very aptly chosen. As the procession enters the church-yard, the very first words that break upon the ear of the mourners are those of Christ Himself. The voice of Him who wept with human sorrows speaks the same words of comfort as He addressed to Martha when grief had nearly crushed her faith:—"I am the Resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;

\* This rubric seems to leave it open to the minister first to proceed with the grave-service, and afterward to conclude by reading the Psalms and Lessons as a sequel to it in the church. Accordingly, the first Prayer-Book of King Edward directed, "these Psalms with the Suffrages following are to be said *in the church*, either *before or after the burial of the corpse*." There is some ambiguity in the rubrics as they now stand; however, the almost universal practice is to be read the service in the order in which it is printed; though the *omission* of any does not appear to be left optional in any case.—See Blunt's Parish Priest, p. 350.

and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.”\*

Then comes another Scripture saying, that whispers to impatient grief to follow those who “through faith and patience are inheritors of the promises.” It is the hope expressed by Job—“an example of suffering affliction and of patience,”—in whose story we are taught to “*see the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy*”—“I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth : and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God : whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.”†

Then follows a passage from St. Paul ; impressing, with a force given by the time and place, the lesson that a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth :—“We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.”‡

It would appear sometimes, from the stately pomp of our funeral processions, as if we tried as far as possible to contravene the Psalmist’s saying, that “though one be made rich, and the glory of his name be increased, he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth ; neither shall his pomp follow him.” And yet, perhaps, this very pageantry does but impress the more, by very

\* St. John, xi. 25, 26.

† Job, xix. 25.

‡ 1 Tim. vi. 7. In this triple funeral Anthem, the 1st part may be regarded as the voice of Christ Himself ; the 2nd, as the response of the dead—but still living saint ; the 3rd, as the choral response of the relatives and friends, expressing submission to God’s will.

contrast with the occasion of it, the vanity and nothingness of the world. The central object of this scenic show is—what? a something that must be hidden out of sight. There, when the world has followed the dead as far as it could—even to the silent tomb itself—*there* it must leave him at last. *There*, inequalities are ended; and pomp and vanity must go away from the still grave-yard, to work on those who are living and being tempted in the restless world.

But the next words—again the words of the patriarch Job—take away all sting from thoughts like these, in the case of those who have “died in the Lord”—who have received of Him “a better and more enduring substance”—and they soothe also our own aching sense of loss—changing the spirit of heaviness into a song of praise—“*The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*”\*

The Psalms selected for this Office are the thirty-ninth, which was, apparently, composed by David while mourning for the death of Absalom; and the ninetieth, which is a prayer supposed to have been composed by Moses during the trials of the wilderness. This latter Psalm speaks strongly of death and suffering as the wages of sin; and it leads to God as the true source of strength and comfort, although it leaves to Gospel revelation those promises respecting the *future* life, which were for Christ to reveal and teach, as they were His only to bestow. And yet, though this Psalm speaks nothing expressly of the *Christian's* hope, that spirit of waiting faith which is led here to cling more closely to God as the one spring

\* Job i. 21.

of all the help and consolation man can find, will gather fresh animation from its trustful language.

The lesson which is read from 1 Cor. xv. contains the fullest teaching on the subject of the Resurrection which the Scripture affords; but to enter upon that remarkable chapter here would carry me too far.\*

The anthem to be said or sung at the grave is taken from the old Burial Offices; and, for the most part, is in the language of Scripture. The prayer at the conclusion of it has been sometimes misunderstood:—"Suffer us not at our last hour for any pains of death to fall from Thee." This is translated from a German hymn by Luther, where the words are, "Suffer us not to fall from the *consolation of true faith*."† This seems to fix the meaning of the expression in that prayer.

When the body has been lowered into the grave, the Presbyter shall say,

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, of his great mercy, to take unto himself the soul of our dear *brother* here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body," &c.

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\* On the passage from verse xxxv. to verse xli. I refer the reader to an interesting extract from an unpublished sermon preached in St. Ann's Church, Dublin, by Bishop Fitzgerald. The extract is given in an appendix to Archbishop Whately's Lectures on a Future State.

† "—lass uns nicht enfallen  
Von des rechten glaubens trost."

See Laurence's Bampton Lectures, note on Sermon viii.

We say here of the departed soul, that God hath taken it "unto himself;" and this is what the Scripture says *of all men alike*. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."\* We say, "in sure and certain hope of *the* resurrection to eternal life through Jesus, who shall change *our* vile body." The expressions are purposely made general; "of *the* resurrection"—"*our* body"—our resurrection—not "*his* body:" and the use of the word *hope* in this general way seems warranted by the Apostle Paul, who, in his speech before Felix,† speaks of himself as "having *hope* toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, *both of the just and unjust*."

After this prayer comes that saying which the Apostle John was commanded to record for the comfort of God's saints in every age:—"I heard a voice saying unto me, *write, from henceforth blessed* [blessed, since Jesus has triumphed over death] *are the dead which die in the Lord: even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours.*"‡ There is something peculiarly grand in such an announcement, then and there. A message from another world tells of blessing, and victory, and rest, just after those words have fallen with their dull, cold weight upon the heart, "*earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.*" A voice from heaven proclaims Death

\* Ecclesiastes, xii. 7.

† Acts, xxiv. 15.

‡ "And their works do follow them," adds the Apostle—Rev. xiv. 13.



conquered, just in the spot where all his spoils are strewn. Even in the scene where all his vaunted trophies are set up—"the cold damp grave, the shroud, the mattock, and the worm"—the voice of ONE that is "stronger than he" asks, "*O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*"

Then thought and hope are carried upward—out of the darkness of that grave, into the light of God. And if we can feel that the departed spirit is among those who live for ever, having "died in the Lord;" is among the souls of the faithful, who, "after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity;" then we can listen calmly to those words that follow: "*We give Thee hearty thanks, that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world,*" &c. Such a thanksgiving seems, perhaps, in the keen agony of grief, too much for human hearts to utter. But it is meant as a thanksgiving on the part of the Church *generally*—as an expression of gratitude for the removal of another Christian from the trials of the world into a state of SAFETY; and it is followed by a prayer on the part of the whole Church that God would be pleased also "*shortly to accomplish the number of His elect, and to hasten his kingdom.*" It is observable (as contrasted with the unreformed Offices), that both these concluding prayers concern the living, not the dead. The last petition which the Church has offered for him who has been taken was the "Commendatory Prayer," committing the departing spirit to God: after that no prayer for him

is said: he is thenceforth beyond the need—or *else beyond the reach*—of prayer.

The second of the two concluding supplications appears “peculiarly designed for the comfort of the relations and friends of the deceased.”\* Some have found fault with the expression—“*That, when we shall depart this life, we may rest in Him, as our hope is this our brother doth.*” The objection is not new; but the old answer (given by the bishops at the last revision) appears to be sufficient still—“It is better to be charitable and hope the best, than rashly to condemn.”† Some may consider it better that the words should be omitted, as is the case in the American Prayer-Book; and yet we need not so much shrink from erring (if we do err) on the side of that “charity which thinketh no evil; which believeth all things, hopeth all things.” For any temptation that such words might seem to give to carelessness or to presumption on our part, the passage itself tends to remove. Here the language is decided enough. If we desire to “die the death of the righteous,” we must pray for ourselves that God would “*raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness.*” There is no other life of which we can feel any reasonable hope that it will close in such a death. But speak no word of judgment—thou—over the dead; “judge nothing before the day;” for “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant?” “Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned.” Hoping—it may be

\* Procter, p. 427.

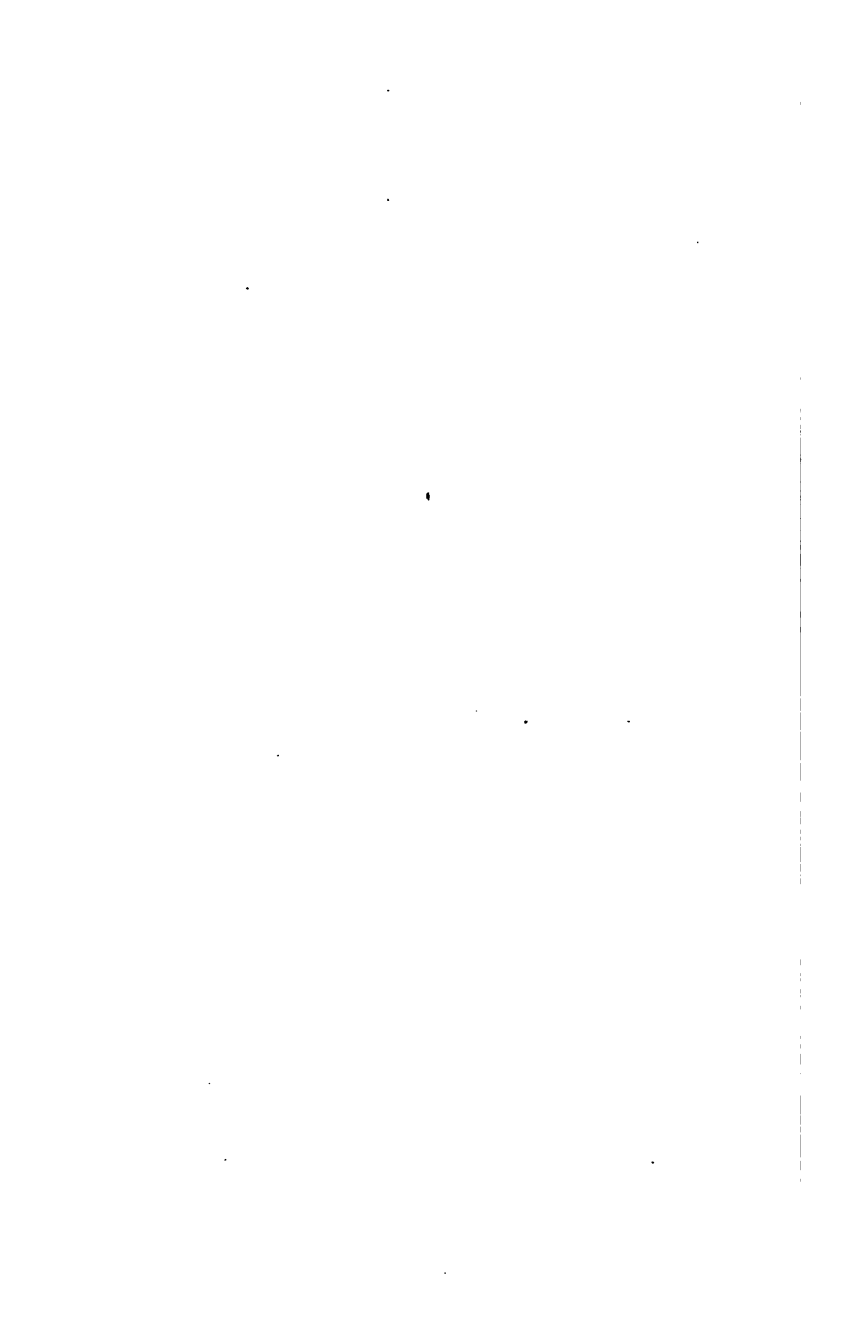
† Cardwell’s Conferences, pp. 333, 362.

against hope, for others—fearing for thyself; seek only to *judge thyself*, that so thou be not judged. Hoping or fearing, leave the dead with God—the spirit with Him who gave it—and go thou to “act in the living present.” Go, as the Service bids you, to live henceforth as one who hopes to be among the “*blessed children of the Father*.” Therefore, as the Apostle urges (in the lesson for this Office),—“Be steadfast, unmoveable; always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” Go (as the closing Benediction asks for you),—in “the *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and in the “*love* of God,” and in the “*fellowship* of the Holy Ghost.” It may be that out of death—even the death of those whom you have loved most dearly, will come life to you. And life—the fulness of it—will surely come, if “grace” brings home to you the lesson which is intended; if “love” leads you to learn it *by heart*; and the abiding power of the Holy Spirit helps you to apply it—

“Then pass, ye mourners, cheerly on,  
Through prayer, unto the tomb;  
Still, as ye watch life's falling leaf,  
Gathering from every loss and grief  
Hope of new spring and endless home.

“Then cheerly to your work again,  
With hearts new-brac'd and set,  
To run, untired, love's blessed race,  
As meet for those, who, face to face,  
Over the grave their Lord have met.”

*The Christian Year.*



## LECTURE XV.

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### COMMINATION SERVICE.

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LAMENT. iii. 40.

*“ Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.”*

THIS Service is entitled, “ A Commination, or Denouncing of God’s anger and judgments against sinners ; with certain prayers, to be used on the first day of Lent, and at other times, as the Ordinary shall appoint.”

It is a relic of “ that solemn public penitence which formed so distinct a feature in the discipline of the early Church ; ”\* and it was meant to be a substitute for it to some extent. So it is stated in the opening Address : “ Brethren, in the primitive Church there was a godly discipline, that at the beginning of Lent such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open penance,” &c.

The custom which is referred to was this :—On the first day of Lent, those who had been convicted of open and grievous sins presented themselves as penitents ; and

\* Procter.

after various ceremonies, such as covering their heads with sackcloth, and sprinkling them with ashes (whence the name "Ash-Wednesday,") they were publicly turned out of the Church—not to be re-admitted till they had undergone a course of probation.

Such a severe mode of dealing with offenders would be, I need hardly observe, entirely unsuited to the present day; it had, no doubt, its uses in those ruder times when the Church was compelled to take notice of crimes which there was no other law at hand to notice or to check. But long previous to the Reformation this custom was a thing gone by. It had, long before that, degenerated into an empty form—into the merely idle ceremony that is practised at the present day in the Church of Rome, that is, of sprinkling ashes on the heads of all persons, indiscriminately, whether declared penitents or not.

Our Reformers express a wish in this Address for a revival of the ancient discipline—that is, substantially, and as regarded its general spirit and design. For they speak only generally; not mentioning any details. And they would hardly have adopted the primitive discipline in every particular; for it would not have been in all respects applicable or practicable, even in their days; and it would, confessedly, be still less so now.

In the progress of civilization and Christianity, this is a result to be expected. Customs and institutions, once wise and useful, will in the course of time inevitably need alteration in some of their details. What simpler, ruder times required, a more refined and polished

age will not admit. And more ; just in proportion as the Statute Law of any country becomes penetrated by the spirit of Christianity, and as the Law of Public Opinion is more imbued with a Christian tone, the less absolutely, or the less *generally*, will several enactments of the primitive discipline be needed.

It is true, indeed, that neither of those Laws which I refer to has become as thoroughly Christian as it ought ; and, on this particular point or on that, we may even have rather fallen back ; still, on the whole, most persons will agree that an improvement has, in many respects, taken place.

The records of the Middle Ages, the history of our own country a few centuries ago, sufficiently show this.

Take, for instance, such books as Pepys' or Evelyn's Diary, which give accounts of the city and court of London in the time of Charles II., in whose reign the Prayer-Book received its last revision.

In reading those books, or any other of the contemporary as well as earlier writers, one cannot wonder that our Reformers should have regretted the absence of the ancient "godly discipline." They saw vice walking unrebuked in high places, and spreading like a pest through the community ; they saw evils round them, and no way of checking them by law or by public opinion ; and so they could not but desire to have that discipline revived, the enforcing of which would remain with the "few godly left," under which even kings and nobles might be brought, who could not be made to hold themselves amenable to any *other* law.

But in our day, not only is the Law of the land carried out with greater strictness and impartiality ; but the Law of opinion speaks out too, and passes condemnation now, in many cases where formerly no remonstrance was raised, and little disapproval, if any, was felt.

The voice of the Christian Church finds a more general utterance in this way that it once did ; and hence there may be less need now for the authoritative imposition of her more solemn censures. The natural tendency of things is, perhaps, to substitute moral restraints of this kind, in many instances, for the external provisions of Church law.

I do not mean to boast of our times. For, in great measure, the improvement of which I have spoken is the immediate result of an increased external refinement, rather than of a deeper sense of religion. Still, this is indirectly at least, if not immediately, the effect of Christianity. And, to some extent, the influence of Christian opinion works *in the same direction* as the old Church censures did.

Take, for example, the censure—commonly passed in olden time—of formal exclusion from the Lord's Supper. At the time of the Reformation, and previously, it was too common for persons who were notoriously loose in their lives to be superstitiously punctual in their observance of that Holy Sacrament. This *profanation* of the Ordinance was the peculiar evil against which our Reformers felt the necessity of guarding ; and therefore they felt severely the absence of a stricter power than they possessed, to pass censure on open offenders, by excluding them from the Table of the Lord.



But now we have rather to lament the *neglect* of this holy rite on the part of those who should partake of it, than the profanation of it by notoriously immoral livers.

For these latter do not attend it. The general agreement of Christian opinion brings such a force to bear upon their consciences—or at least upon their practice—that the same sentence of exclusion which in other days was formally and publicly inflicted by a regular Church-censure, is now imposed upon men *by themselves*. The result is the same, though reached in a different way.

If a man is conscious of such sin as makes him shrink from coming to the Lord's Table, or perhaps even to the House of Prayer, then he is really taking the position of an excommunicated person. And I should say to such a man, "You are, in effect, passing *upon yourself* a sentence of separation from Christ and from His people. Living in sin, and therefore being consistently self-excluded from the privileges of the Church, you are withdrawn from communion with Christian people, and from fellowship with Christ Himself."

It is indeed "much to be wished" that this could be sufficiently impressed upon men's minds; that they could be brought to acknowledge how great are the privileges of that holy fellowship to which they have been called; how true and real are the blessings of the Communion of Saints in Christ; how terrible it is to live in a state of separation from them; and also how much worse that alienation and excommunication really are when thus *self-chosen, self-inflicted*. Our Reformers, in the absence of the discipline of which they felt such need,

desired that the "Commination," or Denouncing, should after *this* manner be brought to bear upon the consciences of men themselves :—

"It is good that (at this time) in the presence of you all, should be read the general sentences of *God's cursing* against impenitent sinners . . . . and that ye should answer at the end of every sentence, *Amen* : to the intent that, being admonished of the great indignation of God against sinners, ye may the rather be moved to earnest and true repentance; and may walk more warily in these dangerous days; fleeing from such vices, for which ye affirm with your own mouths the curse of God to be due."

The whole intention of the Office is plainly this—to set men upon "so judging themselves, that they be not judged;" to lead them to "search and try their ways, and turn again to the Lord."

But we find persons objecting to this Service sometimes, and speaking of it as "*a cursing of their neighbours*." Is then the clergyman, when he reads in church the twenty-seventh chapter of Deuteronomy (from which these sentences are gathered) to be considered as imprecating curses on his congregation? No, surely. He is reading God's word—not praying—when he declares these sentences.

The mistake, however, which people make upon this matter is founded on a misunderstanding of the word "*Amen*." The repetition of it after each sentence gives the impression of a prayer; and I suppose the reason of this may be that the word "*Amen*" is connected in people's minds with one particular explanation of it in the Catechism, as meaning "*So be it*."

It is, in fact, a Hebrew word; and it signifies "*faithful*," "*true*," or "*truly*."

It is used sometimes in the beginning of a sentence, as very often by our Lord, "Amen, Amen, I say unto you;" where the Douay version gives the original word "Amen," and our Translation renders it, "Verily, verily, I say unto you," &c.\*

At the *end* of a sentence the word affirms what has gone before according to the tenor of the previous part; that is, after a prayer, it signifies (as the Catechism rightly interprets it—as it stands there after the Lord's Prayer), "*So be it*."

At the end of the Creeds we express by it our assent to the statements which they contain; "*Amen*," or "*True*;" meaning "All this I steadfastly believe."

And after these "sentences of God's indignation," it simply denotes (as the Preface explains) that we affirm "the curse of *God*" to be declared and "*due*" for such and such sins. "Cursed *is* he;" not, cursed *be* he. It is, you see, a *declaration*, and not a petition—a sentence of God, and not a prayer of man.

The word "penance" in the Exhortation is, I need scarcely remind you, only a shortened form of "*peni-*

\* We find it again in 2 Cor. i. 20—"All the promises of God in Him [Christ] are yea and in Him *Amen*," i. e. certain or true.

In Rev. iii. 14, Christ calls Himself the *AMEN*—"These things saith the Amen, *the faithful and true witness*."

In Isaiah, lxxv. 16, it is said, "He who blesseth shall bless himself in the God of *Truth*; and swear by the God of Truth," or, as the Hebrew is, "*THE GOD AMEN*," i. e. the "*true and faithful*."

*tence*." The phrase, "fruits worthy of penance," is taken from the words of John the Baptist, where, in our present version, it is "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of *repentance*."\* The words "repentance," "penitence," "penance," are used indifferently by our old English writers, to denote that total change of mind and heart, "whereby we forsake sin."†

In later times the word "penance" has, indeed, come to be used for the outward *expression* of this inward feeling—for some particular acts supposed to be a manifestation of it.‡ But our Reformers can no more fairly be accused of employing the word in this its modern, restricted meaning, than they can be said to have meant "*hinder*," when they used the expression "*prevent us*," in the Collecta.

The whole of this Address, the Psalms, and Prayers, are designed to set us on the work of self-examination and repentance.§

\* Luke, iii. 8.

† See, e. g. Latimer's Sermons, where the three words are often used promiscuously.

‡ Just as "mourning" more commonly denotes the garb that outwardly expresses grief; and as "charity" is used in a secondary sense for a particular mode of manifesting "love" to the brethren; and similarly our English word "alms," which is a shortened form of the Greek "Eleemosyne," or "mercy." The tendency of man to substitute the outward expression for the inward principle may be indicated by the prevalent use of these words in the secondary rather than primary meaning of them.

§ The Address was compiled by our Reformers; the rest of the Service was used in the mediæval offices.

This is indeed the work of our whole life—our glory together with Christ, the end of it. But, in this Lenten season, the lesson of our life is, as it were, *epitomized*, or “briefly comprehended.”

Repentance toward God ; faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ ; the warfare with our enemies and His ; the duty of being “temperate in all things,” as they who “strive for the mastery ;” the daily conflict with temptation ; the showing of all diligence unto the end—till the last victory is won ; these are the duties, these make the history of the Christian life. And the lessons that are pressed on us just now, peculiarly, it is our duty “at all times, and in all places” to carry out and practise.

It was they that had “continued with Christ in His temptations,” who afterwards rejoiced because the “Lord had risen.” And those who never have repented of their sins—never examined their own hearts—never known what it was to strive against temptation—never denied themselves that they might follow Christ—and never felt any of those burdens for which they need His help—will not look up to Him as lifted on the cross, “that He might draw all men unto Him ;” will not be able, like his disciples on that first Easter-Day, to “return from the SEPULCHRE with great joy.”

The Services of this preparatory season—from Ash-Wednesday to Good Friday—are meant to help us onward in this course ; through fellowship with Christ in trial and in “overcoming the world,” to be partakers with Him in His joy and glory ; that, being “planted with Him in the likeness of His death, we may be also in the likeness of His resurrection.”

And while the "Bride" thus calls and teaches, may the "Spirit" bring near to our hearts the solemn call which she reiterates; and so apply all the lessons of this holy day and season, that we may show them forth—not for a day or season only—but truly, and through all our lives. May He create in us new and contrite hearts, that we, "worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of Him, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Amen.\*

\* This office may be used not only on Ash-Wednesday, but "at other times, as the Ordinary shall appoint." Archbishop Grindal, in the reign of Elizabeth, ordered it, in his visitations, to be read also before Christmas, Easter, and Whitsun-Day. It may be observed that this Service differs from all our other public forms in being entirely supplicatory. Even the Psalms are used directly as prayers, and are appointed to be said by minister and people "kneeling." The absolution is precatory, not declarative; and the benediction at the close is also expressed in the petitionary form.

## APPENDIX ON OCCASIONAL OFFICES.

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### I. FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED AT SEA.

THESE forms were added at the Restoration, in order to meet the necessities of England's increasing Navy and Commerce. Some of the prayers are appointed to be said daily, in addition to the ordinary service; and some are proper forms for occasional use during, or after deliverance from danger. And there is also appended a short Form to be used in the Burial of the Dead at Sea, instead of the ordinary words said while the body is being laid in the ground.

### II. THE ORDINAL,

OR "FORM AND MANNER OF MAKING, ORDAINING, AND CONSECRATING OF BISHOPS, PRIESTS, AND DEACONS, ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND."

The reformed Ordinal was set forth in A. D. 1550; and was again revised in 1552 and 1661. It is sometimes urged in complaint that the Laity have no voice in the appointment of ministers. But they have really a veto on the admission of any unworthy person to the ministry; and several opportunities of exercising it. A form called a "*Si quis*" is read in church, declaring that So and So

intends to offer himself as a candidate for the Diaconate or Priesthood; and calling on any one who, with reason, objects, to signify his objections forthwith to the Bishop. And in the Offices for making of Deacons and Priests, the Bishop himself calls on the people very solemnly, if they "know any impediment," to "come forth in the name of God," and show what it is.\*

The only passage in these offices which appears to require any particular explanation is that in the "Ordination of Priests;" viz. the words of the Bishop—"Receive the Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God, and of His sacraments; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." The form used in the Consecration of a Bishop is similar to this; and both have been objected to.

A recent critic thus animadvert upon the passage quoted above:—"Such is the language, rash, surely, and presumptuous in the extreme, of that most solemn and important of all the occasional offices of the Anglican Ritual—namely, the form of '*Ordering of Priests*;' and

\* Our Ordination of Priests is not entirely Episcopalian (it should not be forgotten), but partly Presbyterian, and partly Episcopalian. The rubric directs that "*the Bishop with the Priests present* shall lay their hands upon the head of every one that receiveth the Order of Priesthood," &c.; and the Bishop's words are, "for the office and work of a Priest committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands," &c.



such the stupendous powers which one frail man assumes the right to confer upon another when called upon to invest him with the unpretending though responsible duties of the *Pastoral* office. One is almost ready, indeed, in such a case as this, to pass by altogether in silent astonishment at the almost unparalleled presumption that must have dictated them, a form of words so little suited to the occasion, and so utterly repugnant in their present application to the true sense of Holy Scripture," &c. This is strong language; and somewhat bold to use respecting the men who were so careful to remove from this very service everything which might be supposed superstitious, as, e. g. the handing of the chalice and paten, and the anointing of the hands, &c. Do these men mean what their accusers lightly suppose them to mean? Or is it that they have a deeper insight into the Scriptures than is possessed by their objectors? I cannot but think this latter is the real state of the case.

The words of our Lord, "Whose sins," &c.\* have been already spoken of in Lecture XIII. The Apostles' mode of understanding this commission is to be best discovered (as I have there tried to show) by their manner of exercising it; and for that we must refer to the Acts and the Epistles. There we do not find them forgiving sins as against God; but exercising, for the Church, the power of inflicting or remitting such censures and penalties as were imposed on members of the Christian society for certain offences considered as against *the Church*. This power was given by our Lord to the Church through the

\* St. John, xx. 32.

Apostles, who were its first nucleus and representatives ; and still continues with the Church—as a body—to be exercised by her representatively, and according to varying circumstances, through her regularly appointed ministers. I need not enlarge, however, again on this part of the form above objected to.

But, with regard to the words, “Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Priest,” &c., a closer consideration will show them to be quite clear of any “presumption,” and indeed in exact accordance with Scripture itself. I think that those who object to them have only in view one part of the Holy Spirit’s agency—His enlightening and purifying influences ; and because miracles have ceased, limit their notion of the Spirit’s gifts almost, if not altogether, to the one work of *sanctification*.

“But unto every one of us” (says St. Paul, Eph. iv. 7, &c.), “is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And He gave some—Apostles ; and some—Evangelists ; and some—Pastors and Teachers.” Again, St. Paul says to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xii.)—“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit ; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord,” &c. “And God,” (God, by His Holy Spirit—for Christ’s kingdom on earth is, in every part of its government and administration, emphatically the dispensation or “ministration of the Spirit,” 2 Cor. iii. 8)—“And God hath set some in the Church : first, apostles ;

secondarily, prophets ; thirdly, teachers ; after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."\* Now, clearly, the ordinary offices of "teaching," "helps," "governments," are to be regarded as *gifts of the Spirit* quite as much as the extraordinary and miraculous gifts of prophecy, healing, and speaking with tongues. And whichever of these various ministries was conferred upon a man, he was said to receive a gift of the Holy Ghost—or, in the Scripture language, to "receive the Holy Ghost for" that particular office or work.†

St. Paul considers the office of government which had been conferred through him on Timothy, as the gift of the Holy Ghost—himself only as the instrument of its bestowal ; even as in the case of every other gift conferred through him. And he says (2 Tim. i. 6), "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift that is in thee by the putting on of my hands." But he reminds Timothy that constant spiritual strength must be supplied for the maintaining and right exercising of this gift or office :—"That good thing which

\* 1 Cor. xii. 28.

† "Have ye received the Holy Ghost"—or rather, "*any gift of the Holy Ghost*—since ye believed?" says St. Paul (Acts, xix. 2), to certain Ephesians. He laid his hands upon them, and they then received, through his imposition of hands, the gifts of prophecy and speaking with tongues—or, in other words, "received the Holy Ghost" for those particular ministries in the Church. St. Paul did not bestow the sanctifying influence which only could make them use their gifts "rightly and to God's glory."

was committed unto thee, *keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.*"

And, in like manner, he reminds the Corinthians, that it was possible to have received this or that gift of the Holy Ghost, and yet not be a partaker of that *grace* of the Spirit which only could sanctify the gift:—"Covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet show I unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," &c. (1 Cor. xii. and xiii.)

Now, surely we do not imagine that Christ's Spirit is not in His Church because miraculous gifts have been withdrawn. Nay, we confess His presence and power in the external guidance of the Church, as well as in the inward sanctification of its members, saying in our Good-Friday Collect, "Almighty and Everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified," &c. If, then, in the first ages of the Church, all who were called to any office or administration in it were truly said to have "received this or that gift of the Holy Ghost"—whether the office belonged to the class "*extraordinary and miraculous*," or not—we may still say of those who, through the regularly appointed instruments, are called to this or that administration in the Church, that they have received a gift of the Holy Ghost, Who is the doer of all things done duly in the Church of Christ, and the one Giver of every gift, ordinary and extraordinary, that is bestowed upon the members of it. And whether the Bishop were to say "Receive the office of the Presbytery in the Church of God now committed unto thee, through the imposition

of our hands, by Him who giveth some apostles, some teachers, some evangelists ;” or whether the form in the Ordinal be preferred—“Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Priest,” &c., in either case the meaning is substantially the same ; either expresses (if it has any meaning at all) a firm belief in the assurance that Christ is, by His Spirit, with His Church—calling, adopting, dispensing gifts, assigning offices, appointing to ministrations, &c., as well as sanctifying, strengthening, and consoling. The only difference between the two forms above would be this—that the first would be perhaps less likely to be misunderstood. But this really arises from want of familiarity with the Scriptures, and with the Scripture way of speaking. We love to speak in indirect and abstract forms ; saying of a man that “he is appointed under *Providence* to this or that work.” The simpler, more living and personal faith of the Scripture writers shrank not from saying, “he is called of God.” And where many now would say, “Receive under God’s sanction, and as God’s gift, authority to execute such and such an office,” the Christians of old would say,—“Receive the Holy Ghost for such and such an office or work in the Church of Christ.” This latter form of speech is infinitely more expressive ; for it conveys the truth that in the reception of the gift, all that is needed to the exercise of it is, at the same time, bestowed by the Giver. He who “received the Holy Ghost for the work” of prophesying, speaking with tongues, governing, &c., received, withal, whatever was necessary for the exercise of the gift or function—

whether of prophecy, speaking with tongues, government, or teaching. For the *wise, right, and profitable* employment of the gift, he needed the sanctifying grace of God. And so in the case of such ordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost as are continued in the Church—teaching, helps, governments, ruling, &c. or (as we say) of the Pastoral office, the Diaconate—the Priesthood—Episcopate, we may as truly say that, in receiving the Holy Ghost for this or that function, he who is ordained to it receives whatever is required to the exercise—(i. e. the *valid* exercise) of the office. But for the *profitable* use of the gift bestowed—and for the obtaining of any real blessing upon it to himself or to the Church of Christ—that “especial grace” is needed, which he “must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer.”

There is, indeed, no rash presumption in speaking of “the unpretending duties of the Pastoral office” as assigned by the Spirit by which the whole body of the Church is governed; as being a gift of the Holy Ghost, Who “divideth to every man severally as He will.”

“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given unto us; whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of the faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”\*

\* Rom. xii. 6-8.

For each of the gifts or offices here specified there is needed, besides the power to exercise it, that special grace which is to characterize the exercise of each. And surely if the Apostle, in conferring these gifts severally, and the recipient in receiving them, sincerely prayed that God would withal bestow the "spirit of patience—the spirit of earnestness—the spirit of simplicity—of diligence—of cheerfulness—"\* we cannot doubt that such a prayer obtained an answer, and that grace was bestowed corresponding with the gift. Indeed, do we not express this belief in ordinary words, when we say that if God's providence calls a man to such and such a work, we may trust Him to give withal, wherever they are sought, the qualifications needed for it?

Ordination has from the beginning been a service of solemn and special prayer; and when the bishops, and presbyters, and people, join with the candidates for ordination in earnest supplication that God the Holy Spirit, who calls to this sacred office, will give His promised help to those appointed to it, is such a prayer rash or unscriptural? Is there any "presumption," except in *disbelieving* Christ's promise—"If two of you shall agree

\* And these are the fruits, not of a new Spirit, but of the same Spirit who worketh all in all. We do not ask in Confirmation that the persons confirmed shall receive a new Spirit, different from that by which they were adopted—baptized into the one body of Christ, and to which they owe already their spiritual life; but we ask such new supplies of special grace as they shall need in the temptations and difficulties of life. And we express this by saying, "Increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength," &c.

on earth as touching anything that ye shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven ?”

I add the words of our own wise Hooker :—“ A thing much stumbled at in the manner of giving orders is our using those memorable words of our Lord and Saviour Christ, ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost.’ The Holy Ghost they say, we cannot give, and therefore we ‘foolishly’ bid men receive it. Notwithstanding, if it may please their wisdom to hear what fools can say, as to control that which they do ; thus we have heard some wise men teach, namely, that the ‘Holy Ghost’ may be used to signify, not the person only, but the gifts of the Holy Ghost ; and we know that spiritual gifts are not only abilities to do things miraculous, as to speak with tongues which were never taught us, to cure diseases without art, and such like, but also that the very authority and power which is given men in the Church to be Ministers of holy things, this is contained in the number of those gifts whereof the Holy Ghost is author, and therefore, he which giveth this power may say without absurdity or folly, ‘Receive the Holy Ghost,’—such power as the Spirit of Christ hath endued his Church withal, such power as neither prince nor potentate, king nor Cæsar, or earth, can give. . . . . [8]. Now, besides, that the power and authority delivered with these words is itself a *χαρισμα*, a gracious donation which the Spirit of God doth bestow, we may most assuredly persuade ourselves that the hand which imposeth upon us the function of our ministry doth, under the same form of words, so tie itself hereunto, that he which receiveth the burden



is thereby for ever warranted to have the Spirit with him and in him for his assistance, aid, countenance, and support, in whatsoever he faithfully doth to discharge duty.”\*

### III. THE STATE SERVICES.

Up to a recent period (A. D. 1861), these were four in number.† None of them were ever, properly speaking, parts of the Prayer-Book, but only annexed to it by a royal proclamation usually set forth in the beginning of each reign. The observance of the 5th Nov., in commemoration of the gunpowder plot; of the 29th May, in memory of the birth and restoration of Charles II.; and of 30th Jan., in memory of the execution of Charles I., rested originally on Acts of Parliament. At the last revision (in A. D. 1661), these Offices were sanctioned by Convocation, but were not submitted to the Parliament. Afterwards James II. altered the Service for 29th May; and William III. ordered the 5th Nov. to be kept in memory also of his own landing in England, and altered the service accordingly. So that, in fact, these Offices, as until lately printed in our Prayer-Books, had only the authority of the crown—“ exercised, too, in times when such dispensing power was certain to be disputed, when James II. was introducing Popery, and William III. was favouring the Presbyterians.”‡

The authority of the Crown could indeed, at most, only protect against the penalties of using any service not enjoined under the Act of Uniformity; but could not

\* Hooker, book v. ch. lxxvii. 5, 8.

† In the Irish Edition of the Prayer-Book, *five*.

‡ Rev. W. Procter, page 445.

make the use of those services binding. And consequently—as the services themselves contained much that was objectionable—very few ministers used them. They were, in truth, a blot on our Book of Common Prayer. The only State-Service still retained is that which may be used on the anniversary of the Sovereign's accession. But this has only the authority of a royal proclamation,\* and therefore the observance of this day is not to be regarded as obligatory on the clergy. And it does seem objectionable, when we consider that the day of a sovereign's accession, is also the day of his predecessor's death. Those who celebrate as a festivity the coming of Albert Edward to the throne of England, will be commemorating with rejoicings the day of our good Queen Victoria's death.

#### IV. ON CHURCH PSALMODY.

THE English Communion Office originally began with a psalm or hymn, called an "*Introit*," so named because it was sung while the minister "*entered within*" the Communion rails. But this was removed in 1552, perhaps (as has been conjectured) because the custom of singing metrical hymns was then gaining ground.

This use of metrical hymns began in the Churches of the East, and was introduced into the West by Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (374).† By him, and others after him, a collection of Latin hymns was made for congregational and private use; some of these old church hymns Cranmer

\* See Cardwell's *Conferences*, p. 385.

† See, for a fuller account, Rev. F. Procter, p. 173.

attempted to translate, when he was putting forth the Litany in English; in a letter to Henry VIII. he speaks very judiciously of the musical notation which he thought suited to these and other parts of the service:—"In mine opinion, the song that shall be made thereunto would not be full of notes, but, as near as it may be, for every syllable a note; so that it may be sung distinctly and devoutly." In Henry's Primer (of 1545) there were inserted English versions of seven of these hymns; but they were all omitted from the Prayer-Book of Edward VI., with the exception of the hymns in the Ordination Service. Luther had translated and adopted many of these ancient hymns; but the English and Swiss Reformers of the sixteenth century preferred to use metrical versions of the Psalms. What we call the "old version" of the Psalms was begun by Sternhold, who was groom of the robes to Henry VIII. and Edward VI.; this, with additions by Hopkins and others, was republished in 1562, together with about forty tunes.

The "Injunctions" of Elizabeth, 1559, *permit* "that in the beginning or in the end of Common Prayer, either at morning or evening, there may be sung an hymn or such like song to the praise of Almighty God, in the best sort of melody and music that may be conveniently devised." And this gave a semi-authoritative character to the custom; but it was not regarded as sufficient; for among the suggestions of the committee appointed in the reign of Charles I. (1641), one was as follows:—"It is very fit that the imperfections of the metre in the

\* See Cardwell's *History of Conferences*, p. 277.

singing Psalms should be mended, and then lawful authority added unto them, to have them publicly sung before and after sermons." Thus it appears that, although metrical Psalms have been almost always in use in our Church, they have never been formally authorized; for the royal license which is given to our modern version, does not amount to an *authority*; it merely exempts us from the legal penalties which are attached, under the Act of Uniformity, to those who introduce the use of anything whatever that is not specified in the Book of Common Prayer.

The doggrel version now in use was licensed by William III. in 1696; and was the joint production of two Irishmen, Dr. Nicholas Brady, court chaplain, and Nahum Tate, the then poet-laureate.

The addition of modern hymns to our Church Service is undoubtedly, so far as *many* of those hymns are concerned, an improvement; but, as has been truly observed,\*—"it should not be left to individual choice to make so material a change in our form of worship. The practice is inconsistent with uniformity,† . . . it would, indeed, be an invaluable boon to the Church if our bishops would agree upon and recommend some selection that would satisfy a cultivated taste and devout

\* In a pamphlet entitled *Thoughts on the State of the Established Church*, by the Ven. John A. Russell, Editor of *Wolfe's Remains*.

† In Dublin there were, till very recently, no fewer than sixteen different collections of hymns in use.

spirit, and suit by its simplicity the plainest congregation.”\*

Touching CHURCH MUSIC, Hooker thus writes:—“In church music, curiosity and ostentation of art, wanton, light, or unsuitable harmony, such as only pleaseth the ear, and doth not naturally serve to the very kind and degree of those impressions which the matter that goeth with it leaveth or is apt to leave in men’s minds, doth rather blemish and disgrace that we do, than add either beauty or furtherance unto it.”† For the use of melody, both vocal and instrumental, we have, as the Psalms themselves constantly testify, the authority of David himself, of whom the writer of Ecclesiasticus says,—“In all his works he praised the Holy One Most High, with words of glory; with his whole heart he sung songs, and loved Him that made him. He set singers also before the altar, that by their voices they might make sweet melody, and daily sing praises in their songs.”‡ “We have wisely retained,” remarks Bishop Copleston,§—“both vocal and instrumental music, cultivated and refined by professional skill, as an useful and edifying part of public worship.” He urges judiciously that it should be in character “entirely conformed to the spirit of our

\* With this view, a selection of hymns has been lately published by the Association for the Promotion of the Knowledge and Practice of the Christian Religion (Dublin), and has received the approval of most of the Irish bishops.

† Hooker’s Eccl. Pol. book v. c. 38.      ‡ Chap. xxviii. 8, 9.

§ See Remains of Bishop Copleston, edited by Archbishop Whately; Sermon viii. on “Christian Liberty.”

religion; conducive solely to devotional feeling; the handmaid, and not the rival, much less the mistress, of a Liturgy."

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## NOTE I.

THE Rev. Thomas Lathbury, in his *History of the Book of Common Prayer* (page 365), makes the following statement:—"The Church of Ireland has several distinct offices, with various prayers, all duly authorized, which do not exist in our Book of Common Prayer, and which cannot be used in England. A different book, therefore, is provided for the Church of Ireland. In Ireland every one ordained in England is called upon to use forms which he has never subscribed." This is, however, inaccurate. In the Irish edition of the Book of Common Prayer there is an office for the visitation of prisoners. But it cannot be said to be "duly authorized," or binding, as it was only agreed upon, by her Majesty's license, in a synod holden at Dublin in the year A. D. 1711, and forms no part of the MS. Book of Common Prayer attached to the Irish Act of Uniformity of 1666. Nor does the service for Oct. 23 (in memory of the "Irish Rebellion") constitute any part of that book; for though the Irish Act for keeping that day was passed in the 14th and 15th Charles II., that holiday is not inserted in the Calendar of the Irish MS. Book; and though contained in the first *printed* Irish edition of 1666, it appears there only as an irregular appendix, being inserted after the word "*Finis*."\* Its continued use, like the services for Nov. 5, Jan. 30, and May 29, rested on the warrant of a Royal Proclamation, issued in 1715—but it cannot be said, any more than those three services, to have been ever "duly authorized;" and it is now, as well as those, formally abrogated. These are, however, the only "distinct offices" to which Mr. Lathbury can possibly refer. There are also two forms of prayer for the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, either of which is to be used at morning

\* See Stephen's *Introd.* cxxiii.

and evening service. But neither of these are in the Book attached to the Irish Statute of Uniformity. The prayer there given begins, "Almighty God, in whose hands all earthly power doth consist, by whose will, providence, and Spirit, powers are ordained, governments established, and diversities of administrations are dispensed, we humbly beseech Thee," &c., as in the second of the prayers now given. The two prayers now printed in the Irish Book of Common Prayer, and the three rubrics immediately before them, were inserted by an order of the king and council, in 1715. These prayers were *substituted* for the original form, which had the sanction of the Irish Convocation, and the Irish Act of Uniformity.\* There is no prayer for the Lord Lieutenant in the first *printed* Irish edition of 1666.

A rubric here says, "Then shall follow these *five* prayers," although the insertion of the prayer for the Lord Lieutenant makes the number *six*. And it may be questioned whether the Order in Council, directing their use, is not abrogated by the 5th article of the *Act of Union*—"That the Churches of England and Ireland, as now by law established, be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, and be called the United Church of England and Ireland; and that the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, of the said United Church shall be and remain in full force for ever." It is remarkable that in the Irish Statute of Uniformity the only Book of Common Prayer which is recognised is described as being that of the Church of *England*.†

The only other differences between the Irish and English editions of the Book of Common Prayer, as now in use, are the following:—The English edition in the Form for Solemnization of Matrimony, directs the publication of Banns on "three several Sun-

\* See Stephens' MS. Book of Common Prayer for Ireland, page 88; and *Introd.* p. cxxiii.

† "It is true," adds Mr. Stephens (*Introd.*, p. c.), "that in all the editions of the Statutes it is stated to be the Book of Common Prayer 'according to the use of the Church of Ireland;' but the editor has recently examined the MS. Statute deposited in the Rolls Office at Dublin, from which it appears that the printed Statutes of the Realm give a false representation of that record."

days," and "after the second lesson;" the Irish edition adds "or Holidays;" and (in the rubric after the creed) directs that Banns shall be published together with other notices given before the sermon. In the Irish edition, the Lord's Prayer contains a conjunction which is omitted in the English—"Thine is the kingdom, *and* the power," &c. And in the General Thanksgiving it stands thus, "that we may show forth thy praise," &c., instead of the English form "that we show forth," &c.



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#### ERRATA.

Page 48 (foot-note), for cxv., cxviii., read cxv.-cxviii.

" 80, l. 16, for in read is.

" 94 (2nd foot-note), for say, read says.

" 242, l. 9, for Hood, read Hook.

" 280, l. 4 (from bottom), insert a







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